This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

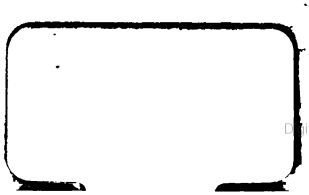
+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

PRESENTED BY
THE MISSES ESTHER CATHARINE,
SUSAN MARY AND JOSEPHINE FRY
FROM THE LIBRARY OF
THE LATE JOSEPH FORREST FRY
AND SUSANNA FRY



Digitized by Google

947

X! 59.50
[Mer

300150343J

ed by Google

Digitized by Google

MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

MRS. HANNAH MORE.

Digitized by Google

SKELEYS, THAMES DITTON, SURREY.

Digitized by Google

MEMOIRS

OF

THE LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE

OF

MRS. HANNAH MORE:

BY WILLIAM ROBERTS, ESQ.

THIRD EDITION;
REVISED, WITH AN ADDITIONAL PREFACE.

VOL. III.

PUBLISHED BY R. B. SEELEY AND W. BURNSIDE:
AND SOLD BY L. B. SEELEY AND SONS,
FLEET STREET, LONDON.
MDCCCXXXV.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

MEMOIRS.

PART III.

(CONTINUED,)

FROM A. D. 1785 TO A. D. 1802.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

MEMOIRS.

PART III.

CHAPTER IX.

We commence the year 1797 with the following letter from Bishop Porteus.

St. James's Square, Jan. 16, 1797.

My dear Mrs. More,

For many virtues I allow you a very competent degree of merit: but none at all for what you call temperance, but what I call niggardliness, in writing. If you would be a little more liberal and even profuse in this article, your character would stand much higher in my estimation than it does at present. You would hear the history of Fulham, (which is not so eventful or so pregnant with revolutions as that of France,) from Mrs. Kennicott. One of our evening books was a collection of Arabic Poems, translated into English by Mr. Carlisle, Professor of Arabic at Cambridge. The originals

Digitized by Google

are prefixed to the translations, but we chose to read the latter. They are not all equally good, but the greater part of them are exquisitely beautiful, and the more so for being totally unlike all the oriental poetry I ever read before, which, to say the truth, I am not in general much enamoured of. They resemble very much the best European sonnets and elegies, but are much superior to them. And what think you of an Arabic riddle and charade? Mr. Pitt, I am told, is quite in raptures with them, and can say most of them by heart. But there is another book with which we are still more delighted (I ought to add edified) than all the rest, and that is what I dare say you have devoured with your usual voracity on such subjects,—Gisborne's duties of the Female Sex. It is, in all respects, excellent. I hope it will be read by every female that can read in the kingdom. I told Lady Elgin that she should make her little pupil read it immediately.

How unfortunate have we been about the French fleet, yet how thankful ought we to be to Providence for defeating their destructive projects! Their abrupt and violent termination of the negociations for peace puts them completely in the wrong, and throws the whole guilt of the war on their shoulders. This gives room to hope that we shall in future be more successful. I pray God we may; as it is the only way to compel peace. What think you of the noble sacrifice Lord Cornwallis has just made, of domestic ease and happiness, and of every blessing this world can give, to the interests of his

Digitized by Google

country? This is genuine patriotism indeed! None but himself could quiet the military commotions in India, and he himself made the offer of his services. I hardly ever heard of such an act of self-denial. He is past sixty, and has nothing to wish or hope for from government. Yet, on recollection, there is another instance of heroism with respect to the same country, not less honourable to the actors in it, than this. I lately saw three Scotchmen who are all going to India, without support, and without protection, to make converts to Christianity. When we hear of these and some other instances of disinterested piety and benevolence that I could mention, who will dare to say that there is no religion or virtue in the world?

The sublime and immortal publication of the 'Cheap Repository,' I hear of from every quarter of the globe. To the West Indies I have sent shiploads of them. They are read with avidity at Sierra Leone, and I hope our pious Scotch Missionaries will introduce them into Asia. I am charmed with the amiable character of 'Black Giles,' and am determined to eat nothing but Mrs. Jones's cheap dishes all this winter. Her and Count Romford I set off against all our taxes! Best love from all.

Your's ever affectionately,

B. LONDON.

Digitized by Google

From the Rev. J. Newton to Miss H. More.

March 5, 1797.

MY DEAR MADAM,

How little we know of ourselves till we are tried! Had any one told me, when I received your favour on the 15th of September, that I should let it lie so long unanswered, I should scarcely have believed him; but so it is. I am overcome by increase of business and increase of years, which makes the little I could do still less.

Indeed, my heart and prayers are often in your diocese. My imagination fixes one foot of her compasses in the palace of Cowslip Green, and with the other, draws a circle of the diameter you mention, and then traces you and Miss Patty upon some of the right lines which lead to the circumference. This, my ideal geography, cannot be accurate; but I think I must often be nearer to you than you are aware. My mind still bears the impression of Shipham and Mendip, with the clearness of a proof print; so that when I think myself there, it seems almost a reality, and I feel quite at home. I have not, with Augustin, wished to see ancient Rome in its glory, but I have been often thankful that I have been permitted to see *Cowslip Green*. I number the few days I spent there, as among the happiest of my life, excepting the abatement of it from my feelings for poor Betsy, while hiding herself in the closet from the thunderstorm.

Your health and spirits I believe are weak, and

Digitized by Google

perhaps your faith is weaker than it ought to be: but the strong, the Almighty arm of the Lord is with you, and therefore you do wonders. Milton's beautiful description of Michael descending to Adam, is finely heightened by the eclipse of the sun, which rendered the glory of the angel more conspicuous. Thus, as you justly observe, the Lord often makes his most honoured and favoured instruments deeply sensible of their own insufficiency, that the praise may be ascribed to him alone.

I should have doubtless written immediately, had any book or books occurred to me quite adapted to your plan. But I am sure Mr. Bunyan was a plain writer. I expounded or explained the first part of his Pilgrim, twice during my residence at Olney; each time it employed one evening in a week for more than three years. And perhaps in those lectures I came nearer to the apprehensions of the poor lace-makers, and engaged their attention more, than when I spoke from the pulpit. I am not much acquainted with his other writings, but I believe several of his books have been very useful.

This leads me to observe that, in my judgment, very alarming books are not the most suitable for ignorant folks, and especially, if, as is generally the case, gross ignorance is found combined with great wickedness. The evil and desert of sin, and its certain and terrible consequences, unless repented of and forsaken, ought doubtless to be insisted on; but it is the grace of the gospel that softens and wins the heart. By nature and practice we are in a state of alienation from God; we form hard thoughts of him,

Digitized by Google

and therefore do not like to think of him at all, because we know not his name,—his true character. The gospel tells us that *God is love*, and gives this astonishing proof, that he gave his own Son to die for his enemies. Many daring sinners need not to be told that their state is dangerous; they feel it, and the more the thought is pressed upon them the more their enmity against God is increased; they know they can neither resist nor escape; they have nothing to hope, but every thing to fear, and therefore they hate him.

A friend of mine was desired to visit a woman in prison,—he was informed of her evil habits of life, and therefore spoke strongly of the terrors of the Lord, and the curses of the law; she heard him awhile, and then laughed in his face; upon this he changed his note, and spoke of the Saviour, and what he had done and suffered for sinners; he had not talked long in this strain, before he saw a tear or two in her eyes; at length she interrupted him by saying, 'Why, Sir, do you think there can be any hope of mercy for me?' He answered 'Yes, if you feel your need of it, and are willing to seek it in God's appointed way. I am sure it is as free for you as for myself.' She replied, 'Ah! if I had thought so, I should not have been in this prison. I long since settled it in my mind that I was utterly lost; that I had sinned beyond all possibility of forgiveness; and that made me desperate.' He visited her several times, and when she went away, (for she was transported) he had good reason to hope that she was truly converted. He gave me

Digitized by Google

this relation more than forty years ago, and it has been, I hope, of some use to me through the course of my ministry. Christ crucified, is the wisdom and power of God.

Just as I was finishing the above paragraph, who should come in but your amiable sister Sally: we almost jumped for joy at seeing her. She favoured us with her company to dinner and tea. Our joy was abated by her account of your indisposition; but you are in the Lord's hands. I would make you quite well instantly if I could. I am sure He can, and therefore if he does not, it must upon the whole be best for you to be an invalid.

Do you remember my ideal speech to a Bishop, which I read at Cowslip Green; you then said '*print it,*' *meo periculo;* so said some other respectable persons; I believe Sir Charles was one: Mr. Serle was another; but it has lain dormant till now, out of regard to my own Bishop; who has been uniformly so candid and kind, that I was unwilling to give him any offence or uneasiness by making grievances in which he has no hand, so public; yet I wished the subject might be brought before him. At length I resolved to present it to him as a sort of legacy, or the last words of J. N——; accordingly I left it at London House last Monday, and have to-night an obliging note from him saying that he returned from Bath but last night, and had not yet had time to read it. He did not intimate the least displeasure at the letter that accompanied it, which mentioned the occasion and the subject. Perhaps when you go to Fulham you may hear something of it.

Digitized by Google

I could tattle on, but time and paper fail me. May the fast-day prove a feast-day to you and to all whose 'eyes affect their hearts.' I am jealous for the Lord of Hosts, and his ark among us.

I beg to repeat my best respects.

I commend you to the guidance of our great Shepherd. May his presence comfort your heart, and his blessing crown all your labours of love for his sake. We are all well through mercy: but I am old, and the time of my departure cannot be far distant. While I live you will have a warm place in the heart and prayers of, my dear Madam,

Your very affectionate,
and much obliged,
JOHN NEWTON.

From Mrs. H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Bath, 1797.

If I *do* write, quoth I to myself, in the humour I am in, I shall convince my most honoured friend that I have no wit; and if I do *not* write I shall prove to a demonstration that I have no gratitude. Thus the matter stood for a long time in exact equipoise; but at last recollecting that wit was only a *talent*, and gratitude a *virtue*, I was resolved to secure to myself the reputation and comfort of the one, though at the risk, nay the certainty, of forfeiting all pretensions to the other. Now, Madam, I appeal to your discernment, if I have not made the better choice? Of attaining to the one I despair; it is a rare but dangerous present—

Digitized by Google

but come, Gratitude! thou peaceful, amiable virtue, and confess (though thou art less addicted to confession than to feeling) if I did not cherish thee in my heart, this morning, when I received so delightful a letter from Audley Street. Nothing could have diminished the entire pleasure that letter gave me, but the unpleasant intelligence of the indisposition of the writer.

I did not get hither to my winter quarters till Christmas. I was so earnestly pressed to halt at Stoke, with the Duchess, in my way, that I complied for three or four days. Very strong indeed were the intreaties of my noble hostess that I should remain during the visit of the whole house of Manners, but I was constrained to be equally firm in my refusal.

Since I have been here I have so entirely lost my cough as to be able to drink the waters, which do me much good. Now, my dear Madam, if you do not think here is already a sufficient quantity of egotism, I will go on to tell you, that though I go to the pump, I do not make any visits, not having set my foot to the ground these two months. I shall, however, make an exception in favour of your neighbours, Lord and Lady Kenyon, who have done me the honour to desire to be acquainted with me. I am much pleased with the plain unadorned integrity, the simplicity of manners, the respect for piety, of this great Lord Chief Justice: I think he discovers more reverence for virtue and religion in his decisions than any law leader I remember.

My friends are extremely kind, so that I have full

Digitized by Google

as much company as my heart can wish. Lady Herries is here, with the full use of her limbs, which I am glad of; though, if they had been my limbs, I question if I should have thought the use of them worth purchasing at the expense of living abroad—better be dying in England, than well any where else, is my maxim.

Grave as the times are, Bath never was so gay; princes and kings that will be, and princes and kings that have been, pop upon you at every corner; the Stadtholder and Prince of Wales only on a flying visit; but their Highnesses of York are become almost inhabitants, and very sober and proper their behaviour is. The Duchess contributes by her residence in it, to make our street alive. I had the honour of spending a morning with her Royal Highness. Her conversation was judicious and lively: the waters have been of service to her; she has had the goodness to present me with a beautiful little box with her hair, set round with pearls on the lid.

Lady Waldegrave writes me but a sad account of poor Lord Orford. Of Mrs. Carter's recovery, though slow, I hear better accounts. I say nothing of war, because I am weary of the word, nor of peace, because I lose all hope of it. I am thankful, however, that the fault does not rest with us; one can bear the affliction far better, when one has not to bear the guilt also.

Alas! my dear Madam, your letter has just arrived which announces the affecting tidings of Lord Orford's death,—affecting in no small degree;

Digitized by Google

though I have been in daily expectation of such an event taking place, my feelings are quite overcome when I call to remembrance that kindness which knew no interruption during twenty years.

I am, dear Madam,

Affectionately yours,

H. More.

Mrs. H. More to Mrs. Martha More.

London, 1797.

Poor Lord Orford! I could not help mourning for him as if I had not expected it. But twenty years' unclouded kindness and pleasant correspondence cannot be given up without emotion. I am not sorry now that I never flinched from any of his ridicule or attacks, or suffered them to pass without rebuke. At our last meeting I made him promise to buy 'Law's Serious Call.' His playful wit, his various knowledge, his polished manners, alas! what avail they now! The most serious thoughts are awakened. Oh that he had known and believed the things that belonged to his peace! My heart is much oppressed with the reflection.

The most rational and religious evening, by far, that I have passed in town, was at Gloucester House, where I have been twice. It would make some folks smile to know that we read the epistle to the Ephesians, and commented as we went along. Mr. Wilberforce's chapter on 'Human Corruption,' led to a long discussion on that doctrine, and other

Digitized by Google

grand points. I told the Duchess of Gloucester that Mr. Wilberforce was to send her his book: she was quite charmed, and said she would sit up all night rather than not be qualified to talk about it with me when she sees me again. I am curious to hear what people say of this book. All agree that it is well written; that it is a very able book; even some worldly people admire it highly. Of course those who thought Gisborne strict, will think Wilberforce ten times more so.

From the same to the same.

Fulham Palace, May, 1797.

I am just come from attending the royal nuptials at St. James's. It was indeed a most august spectacle. If, indeed, it had been only the spectacle and the procession which I could have seen, I should have had little curiosity, but the Bishop, who has the management of the whole chapel, secured me a place with Mrs. Porteus so near the altar that I could hear every word distinctly. The royal bride behaved with great feeling and modesty; the Prince of Wirtemberg had also a very becoming solemnity in his behaviour. The King and Queen wept, but took great pains to restrain themselves. As I looked at the sixteen handsome and magnificently dressed royals sitting round the altar, I could not help thinking how many plans were perhaps at that very moment forming for their destruction; for the bad news from Ireland had just arrived. They talk of the number of acknowledged malcontents

Digitized by Google

being 150,000, but I believe not a large part of that number have arms. I forgot to say that the King gave his daughter away, and it was really very affecting. The Archbishop read the service with great emphasis and solemnity. The newspapers will have described all the crape, and the foils, and the feathers, and the diamonds, &c. We were four hours in chapel.

Lord Orford's executors, Mrs. Damer, and Lord Frederick Campbell, have sent me word they will return all my letters, which they have found carefully preserved. I am also applied to in form to consent to give up such of his letters to me as are fit for publication. I have told them how extremely careful I am as to the publication of letters, and that I cannot make any positive engagement; but if when I get to Cowslip Green, I should find on looking them over, that any are quite disencumbered of private history, private characters, &c,—I probably shall not withhold those in my possession; but I am persuaded that after they are reduced as much as will be necessary, there will be little left for publication.

I dined one day at Admiral Gambier's (my kindly-attached friend with whom I spent so many pleasant days at Teston) to meet Sir Charles Middleton, who really brings a comfortable account of Mrs. Bouverie; and I begin to take hope about her.

The Morning Chronicle, and other *pious newspapers*, have laboured to throw such a stigma on the association for the better observance of Sunday,

Digitized by Google

that the timid great are sheering off, and very few indeed have signed. It has, however, led to so much talk and discussion on the subject, as to produce a very considerable effect, and a number of high people have said, that, though they will not bind themselves in form, they will conform to the spirit of the resolution. I doubt, however, whether those who shew a timidity so little creditable to them, will do much. The Duchess Dowager of Beaufort, with her usual kindness to me said, if I wished it, she would certainly sign; otherwise she thought such an old woman could add no credit to it; but I suggested that her high rank might attract others. Friday I dined at the Bishop of London's, and spent the evening at Gloucester House. I know not whether it comes under the act of treason, or misprison of treason, to go to a royal house in colours, for people are in such deep mourning as to wear black handkerchiefs and gloves. It is not, however, universal, for at a small party on Saturday, at Mr. M. Montagu's, many were in colours. I met there Lord St. Helen's, Mr. King, the American minister, and others of that stamp.

I was much affected at the death of poor Mason. The Bishop of London was just reading us a sonnet he had sent him on his seventy-second birth-day, rejoicing in his unimpaired strength and faculties; it ended with saying that he had still a muse able to praise his Saviour and his God,—when the account of his death came. It was pleasing to find his last poetical sentiments had been so devout; I would that more of his writings had expressed the same

Digitized by Google

strain of devotion, though I have no doubt of his having been piously disposed; but the Warburtonian school was not favourable to a devotional spirit. I used to be pleased with his turn of conversation, which was of a peculiar cast.

I have been meeting Mr. Smelt, who at seventy-two is come up to equip himself for entering into the military; there is patriotism for you! I dined yesterday with Mrs. Goodenough, the accomplished sister of the Speaker.

From Mrs. H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Cowslip Green, July 31, 1797.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I remember to have read in some good old story-book, that when a number of pert Athenians prated away to a foreign ambassador, in order to inspire him with an admiration of the Attic eloquence, a plain quiet man got up and only said, 'And pray tell your master, when you get home, that you found one among the Athenians who knew how to be silent.' Now, my dear Madam, by way of application, I rather value myself on the resemblance, when I consider how your correspondences, various, and extensive, and interesting, and frequent as they are, must engross all your leisure; and though I really experience few gratifications equal to what I feel on receiving your letters, which have such a variety of claims on my feelings, yet I should think I ought to sacrifice my pleasure to your convenience, even if I had not so many true and

Digitized by Google

lawful pleas to bring forward, for having become the worst correspondent in the world.

But, my dearest Madam, self-denial may go so far, but it will go no farther; and I can no longer forbear slipping in a word edge-ways just to inquire after your health; a question which I do not mean to ask in a cold, formal, cursory way, as a thing in which I have only a common interest, but as a matter in which I have the most heartfelt concern, though I do not often express my zeal on the subject by overt acts.

I am almost ashamed to advert to any thing that passed in London or its neighbourhood, lest I put you and myself on comparing dates and chronologies, and bringing to mind how very long it is since we have had any communication together. It was the day after the royal nuptials, at which I had the honour to be present, the kind Bishop having provided for me an excellent place with Mrs. Porteus, so close to the altar that no peeress had so full an enjoyment of the affecting spectacle. Many of your family, my dear Madam, I had the satisfaction to see filling distinguished situations in the magnificent scene.

From those splendors, a few days transported me to my little thatched cottage, where I arrived just time enough to receive my friend Mr. Wilberforce and his bride, who spent a few of their first wedded days here; by which he fulfilled a sort of vow made many years since, in case he should ever marry. You will think it was not amiss to make his agreeable wife set out with such an act of humility.

Digitized by Google

Whether it will please God to give us peace is as yet among the impenetrable secrets of his providence. I hardly expect it, because I do not feel that we are worthy of such a blessing. It is in the mean time matter of abundant thankfulness that, even if he be pleased to withhold peace, he bestows plenty, and that the earth is covered with his bounties in no common degree. I am rejoicing in the effects of this glorious weather, even though bilious head-ache comes in for its share among them.

Poor Edmund Burke has added to the illustrious catalogue of losses which this summer has produced. What an eventful period it is! But mutiny and scarcity have been, I think, the most horrid forms in which calamity has appeared to terrify and awaken our sleeping country. The last has been graciously taken away; the first appears to be happily subdued; but so accustomed are we now to surprises and marvels, that one hardly takes breath from the disappearance of one before another starts up. Among the more auspicious wonders and revolutions of the times, we may consider that of Mr. Erskine figuring in a theological character; and an admirable metamorphosis it was. I greatly commended my friends, who undertook that prosecution against Paine's bookseller, for selecting Erskine in preference to any other counsel, not merely on account of his talents and eloquence, but chiefly because that Erskine being known to be rather of the same party in politics, *his* attack upon his infidel principles would not lie under the imputation of party prejudice, to which the same

Digitized by Google

arguments from Lord Kenyon, or any other acknowledged friend to government, would have been liable. Prejudice apart, his defence of Christianity was not only very brilliant, but very solid; and it struck me that such a degree of religious knowledge, which could hardly have been expected in a man either of his rank or profession, could only be ascribed to his Scotch education, in which I believe religious instruction continues to maintain a more distinguished place than with us; I should rather say *did* maintain, for I fear we are now in both countries pretty much upon a level.

I hope Lady Cremorne has recruited her strength: she was still weak when I was at Chelsea. Of Mrs. Montagu I hear nothing.

Your's ever, my dearest Madam,
most faithfully,
H. More.

The Rev. J. Newton to Mrs. H. More.

Southampton, August 9, 1797.

My dear Madam,

No more letters from the Hermitage at Priestlands. Mr. Etty, the owner, is removed to a better world, and it gives him no regret now that he is known no longer here. Thus we are all successively passing away, just as, when the clouds pass by the sun, the shadows of those clouds dance swiftly across the plain one after another.

But I have a pretty summer-house and prospect here. Here, however, I must not stay this morn-

Digitized by Google

ing. I am engaged, I am going, I am gone, to the Vale of Mendip, to Cowslip Green, to the Root-house, where, perhaps, the ladies are just now assembling to breakfast. Oh! could I actually see them, with what glee should I say, 'Good morrow, ladies!'

Well, I must be content with ideal visits for the present, but not always—a day is approaching when we hope to have a joyful meeting indeed! I trust that Cowslip Green is holy ground, and all the inhabitants consecrated persons; sprinkled, like the priests of old, with the atoning blood; anointed with the holy unction; and devoted with united hearts, hands, and tongues to do the will, and to proclaim the praise of our God and Saviour. It is no wonder that I so long to be with them. I correct myself, it is one of the greatest wonders that such a wretch, such a demoniac as I once was, should be capable of feeling so strong an attachment to such company; well may I say, "what has God wrought!"

'Thy people wonder when they see,
A wretch like me restored;
And point and say, how changed is he,
Who once defied the Lord!'

Indeed I am with you in spirit, and I think this is more than a sally of imagination; the communion of saints which we profess to believe, like the communion of the members of the body, is derived from a communication of life and spirits from the same common head, by which they have reciprocal fellowship and fellow-feeling among themselves;

Digitized by Google

and though believers, the salt of the earth, are scattered up and down, far and wide, to preserve the whole mass from putrefaction, they are all *one* in him. The supreme object of their love is as yet unseen. For his sake they love all who love him, though it is but a few of them comparatively that they can expect to see, until he shall collect them together in the great day of his appearance. The virtue of the heavenly magnet, which draws them all to himself, connects them at the same time with each other. Their aims, their hopes, and their spiritual sustenance are the same. Local distance neither discourages their mutual prayers, nor prevents their efficacy. The apostle highly prized, and earnestly desired the prayers of his absent friends, even of those whom he had never seen in the flesh.

But how is it that these members of the same body are often so shy and suspicious of those whom they do know, and who are partakers of the same grace? indeed, we may ask how is it that Christians are, in many respects, inconsistent with themselves and their principles? Because they are still encumbered with an evil nature, a body of sin, a a remnant of pride, prejudice, and self-will. Satan has a magic glass, and there are certain magical words, most of which owe their influence, if not their origin, to him. By this the believer's sight is vitiated, and his understanding confused. When he looks at a brother Christian, as he would hope he is, he sees a Calvinist, or an Arminian, a High-churchman, a Sectary, a Methodist, &c. One of these names, per-

Digitized by Google

haps, he prides himself in avowing, and therefore allows that those who bear it must be infallibly right; the others he dislikes, and therefore takes it for granted that those who bear them must be very wrong; and though he would hope the best, he is not desirous of actual communion with such perverse, mistaken people. And yet, perhaps, some of them are much more spiritual, humble, and exemplary than himself. But he sees them through the medium of party prejudice, and certain habits of thinking; and therefore cannot acknowledge them, as he would gladly do, if he knew them aright. It requires much prayer, attention, experience, and observation, to be able to surmount these obstacles to the exercise of brotherly love, and to enable us without distinction, to love all of every name who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. I hope I have attained a little of this Catholic spirit, and that my high regard for you in particular owes nothing to the non-essentials, concerning which *true Christians may differ,* and too often *do squabble,* but is founded in a union of heart on the great points in which all who are taught of God do, and must agree.

You would know without my signing it, that this letter comes from me, by the desultory manner in which it is written. I seldom know how I shall begin, or when I shall end, when I take up my pen; but, as John Bunyan says, 'still as I pull, it comes,' and so I write. I hope, however, that you will accept it as a love token—then the principal design is answered. May the lights on Cowslip Green illu-

Digitized by Google

minate the whole country, and may they long continue to burn and shine. Amen.

We left London the 4th of July; and were a fortnight at Reading with Mr. Cadogan's widowed people. They have had a great loss, but the Lord blesses them with unanimity and love. I have seldom met with such a body of solid, lively, judicious, honourable professors in one place. I doubt not but the Lord will appear in their favour, though things are dark and trying at present. We came hither the 21st, and I mean to stay till about the second week in September, if not called home sooner by something as yet unforeseen. My dear Betsey and I are both well; we join in best love to you, and to all the ladies of the Green; to Mr. and Mrs. Jones, and the friends whom we had the pleasure of seeing at your house. May the Lord afford health and strength for accomplishing all the good purposes he has put into your hearts, and may you find your wages in your work. I commend you all to his blessing. Accept of new thanks for old kindness.

Your much obliged and affectionate

JOHN NEWTON.

From Bishop Porteus to Mrs. H. More.

Betchworth, Aug. 31, 1797.

MY DEAR MRS. MORE,

The conclusions you drew from the important article you saw in the newspapers respecting me and my movements, were perfectly logical and just.

Digitized by Google

They are strong symptoms of my being still an inhabitant of this tumultuous world. And the real fact is that I am not only alive at this moment, but was so at the time you had the good fortune to meet with the entertaining paragraphs you have quoted. We had a very pleasant journey into Derbyshire. Ashbourne itself (the little country town we went to) is of all others I ever saw, the most beautiful in its appearance, especially as you approach it from the south. It is situated in a sweet valley, through which runs the *River Dove*, (so celebrated by Isaac Walton) and surrounded by a complete amphitheatre of verdant hills, and beyond them wild romantic mountains, and one especially, well known by the name of Thorp Cloud. The walks and rides on every side are endless, and perfectly enchanting; and within a circuit of five or six miles around it are several places of great note and of a singular character, visited by all travellers, such as Dovedale, Matlock, &c. Upon the whole, I scarcely know any place in this island, except perhaps Ripon in Yorkshire, at which place I was educated and lived in the early part of my life, where I would rather choose to retire and spend the short remainder of my days in peace and solitude, if I knew how to disencumber myself of my present onerous magnificence.

After spending about a fortnight in this delicious country, we took our route homewards through Staffordshire, Warwickshire, &c. and on our way paid two visits, one to Mr. Gisborne, the other to Lord and Lady Harcourt. The former has a very

Digitized by Google

handsome and delightful habitation in the very heart of Needwood Forest, a large tract of ground belonging to the crown, and abounding with all those rude and picturesque scenes which produced his 'Walks in the Forest.' He lives in a style of plentiful hospitality, without luxury or parade. The only magnificent thing I saw about his house was a most venerable looking husbandman or bailiff, so strongly resembling the Prince of Wirtemberg, both in corpulence of person and openness and honesty of countenance, that I immediately dignified him with the name of His Serene Highness.

I am not sure whether you ever were at Nuneham, Lord Harcourt's residence, about six miles from Oxford. It is a place possessing great natural beauties, which have been very much improved by Browne, Whitehead, and Mason; the last two of whom lived a great deal together at Nuneham. Mason laid out the flower garden in excellent taste. It is one of the most perfect I have ever yet seen. In that garden Lord Harcourt is going to erect a cinerary urn, in memory of his friend Mason, in the true classical style; and on it will be inscribed a very pretty poetical elegy by Lady Harcourt; which, I believe, you have not seen, and therefore I shall enclose a copy of it.

Accept Mrs. Porteus's kindest wishes for your better health, and be assured of the perfect regard and esteem with which

I am, my dear Mrs. More,
Most affectionately yours,
B. LONDON.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. H. More to Mrs. Boscawen.

Bath, Dec. 27, 1797.

MY DEAR MADAM,

This solemn and gracious season has a natural tendency to bring more immediately before our eyes and hearts those friends in whose happiness one is more particularly interested. Judge then, my dearest Madam, if you are not among the foremost in my best wishes and hearty prayers, as well for those blessings which more particularly belong to this period, as for those which are of all seasons.

I participate, my dear Madam, in the satisfaction you must have felt at the august and solemn celebration at St. Paul's having gone off so quietly. Many hearts, I trust, were deeply affected on that day; and, thank God, that among all our alarms, we have still the forty-sixth Psalm, Luther's favourite, on our side; and that, amidst a too visible decay of piety, we do not yet formally worship reason, or deify liberty. I cannot help wishing, however, that while the suspended rod is mercifully withheld, we might seriously lay to heart the admonition held out to us by other countries.

Bath—gay, happy, inconsiderate Bath! bears no signs of the distresses of the times: we go about all the morning lamenting the impending calamities, deploring the assessed taxes, and pleading poverty; and at night every place of diversion is overflowing with a fulness unknown in former seasons; and as a proof that every body is too rich to need to stay

Digitized by Google

at home, there is not a lodging to be had in this whole quarter for love or money. Our quiet villages began to wear a very military aspect before I left the country; our most respectable neighbours were forming volunteer corps at their own expense; and the coast just below being one of the places which lie most open to invasion, gun-boats are stationed and fortifications erected under the command of General Rooke. It was a great satisfaction to see our poor so well disposed: they were so elated by Lord Duncan's victory, that they actually ran to the clergyman, and said they were now willing to be taxed double. They have indeed borne their burthens with great patience, and are quite an example to the *talking* patriots!

H. More.

From Mrs. H. More to her sister.

Palace, Fulham, May 7, 1798.

I had a very quiet, pleasant visit at Mitcham, contrasting well with the scene I had quitted in town. Mr. Cecil was faithful as usual to his annual assignation. I did not enjoy much of poor Mr. Hoare's company; so occupied was he in arming and exercising. He rises at half-past four at Mitcham, trots off to town to be ready to meet at six the Fleet Street Corps, performing their evolutions in the area of Bridewell, the only place where they can find sufficient space; then comes back to a late dinner, and as soon as it is over, goes to his committees, after which he has a serjeant to

Digitized by Google

drill himself and his three sons on the lawn till it is dark.

Upon my arrival here, I found quite a conclave of bishops, Durham, London, Lincoln, with their ladies. The Bishop of Lincoln gave me the enclosed. It was the result of the Lambeth meeting, and I am glad it has a little checked the military ardour of the clergy; their number being only one, or at most two in a parish, would have been too inconsiderable to have been of any great use; and it would have unhinged them from that more important station in which they may be incalculably more useful. While I think of it, desire Hazard to give you a parcel of the papers containing the texts which the Moravians give their people, inculcating duty to kings, and enclose me as many as a cover directed to the bishop will hold. The people are all in raptures at the arrival of that romantic hero Sir Sidney Smith; the bells rung as as he passed through this place; I am glad when they can be pleased without mischief. The Bishop of Lincoln staid with us till Tuesday, only he stole off now and then to his old pupil,[1] and went down to Holwood with him on Saturday and Sunday, where the bishop says he is as eager about planting, and putting in *this* tree, and pulling up *that* hedge, and erecting *the other* seat, as if he had not a whole nation on his back. What is surprising, with his load of business, is, that he has contrived already to get through the three quartos

[1] Mr. Pitt.

Digitized by Google

of Sir Robert Walpole, which he greatly likes: he says it is ill-written, but very interesting, and sets Sir Robert's character very high. The Bishop of London went yesterday to dine at Lambeth, and we ladies went to dine with Lady Cremorne, who gave me some religious generals for your collection. She came down stairs on Sunday at eight in the morning, and found Admiral C——, another admiral, and a general, with their Bibles, each separately in different parts of the room, and so at times all the day; it put me in mind of Sir Richard Hill. In the morning we had a visit from her Royal Highness of Gloucester, whom I had the honour of introducing at Fulham; the Bishop and Mrs. Porteus were much pleased with her sweetness and good humour.

From Mrs. H. More to her sister.

Broomfield, May 29, 1798.

On paying my respects the other day at Gloucester Lodge, I found the Duchess had been reading Lord Orford's works, just published. The Bishop and I began to tumble over the leaves, when among the first things I saw was my own hideous picture. I almost screamed; the Duchess ran to see what was the matter, and was quite diverted at the discovery, for she did not know it. There had been no presents made of the work; indeed, as the copyright had been sold, it was not reasonable that any should expect so costly a present; I was, therefore, surprised yesterday to receive a note from

Digitized by Google

Miss Berry, saying, she desired my acceptance of this memorial of our late friend. I did not at all expect such a compliment. I believe I am the only living correspondent to whom any of the letters are addressed.

I have been reading the Bishop's six lectures at St. James's, and his charge; all very good. I hope the latter will be printed, but that cannot be, until he has gone through the country part of his visitation, which he has been obliged to suspend, as the scene of it lies a good deal on the Essex coast, and he was informed that the people were so full of military ideas, and the prospect of an invasion, that they would pay little attention to ecclesiastical orders. The publication of the American State Papers has afforded high entertainment, and it is thought will be of great use, by exposing the rapacity of the Directory to their friends as well as enemies.

May 31st. Were you not all well nigh out of your wits at Pitt's duel? We were all in the utmost consternation, especially poor Mr. Wilberforce. It was no small consolation to us all that he had borne his testimony against duelling so strongly in his book, previous to this shocking event. What a dreadful thing, that a life of such importance should be risked, (or indeed any life at all,) on the miserable notion of false honour! To complete the horror, too, they chose a Sunday!

I have been strongly tempted to go round by Mongewell and Oxford in my way home, as the Bishop of Durham has been very urgent with me;

Digitized by Google

indeed, I feel it would have been a right thing, as the Bishop and I should have conferred together upon some important points; but this I found would break in upon another week; and Mrs. Kennicott, with whom I proposed going, has changed her plan.

Mr. Wilberforce is just come from the House, and to my great joy, tells me he has given notice that he shall make a motion for some measures to be taken to put a stop to the impious and detestable practice of duelling. It is a bold step. May God grant it success! Every body here is much pleased with the flourishing account you give of our schools. Mrs. C—— has been in to see me, and I have been rating her about her equipments; but she says she dresses on the Cheap Repository plan: and if we will commend people so much for being notable and patched, it is very hard to scold them for following one's directions. Having little to say, and no time to say it in, I will enclose for your amusement a letter from Mr. H. T——, which gives a pleasing account of the improving prospects of the Slave Trade question. Adieu.

H. M.

From Bishop Porteus to Mrs. H. More.

St. James's Square, 1798.

MY DEAR MADAM,

If I may believe your own hand-writing, it is now nearly twenty years since I heard from you; for your last letter is dated Nov. 16, 1779. I am therefore extremely anxious to hear how you have been,—

Digitized by Google

what you have been doing,—and what wonderful events have passed under your observation during this long space of time. You must have been witness to a great variety of interesting scenes, may have seen a great number of wars, negociations, and revolutions,—may have beheld kingdoms and republics alternately destroyed and set up—may have lost many old friends and gained many new ones; may have travelled much farther than Ulysses, Anacharsis, or Captain Cook,—read through all the large libraries in Europe, and published many millions of excellent books and tracts. You will therefore have the goodness in your next to give me a short compendious history of your life and adventures during the last twenty years; and if you will allow me also to publish it, I have no doubt that it will pass through more editions than Mr. Erskine's pamphlet on the war, and enable me to pay my assessed taxes without the least difficulty.—As for myself, so incessant have been my occupations and so rapid the succession of my ideas, that what appears from the date of your letter to be a period of almost twenty years, has seemed to me to be little more than two months: and such is the extreme velocity with which these ideas have passed through my mind that they have left no traces behind them, and I can recollect nothing that is worth relating to you; all that occurs to me at present is that we passed ten weeks very comfortably and quietly at Fulham, and that in the course of that time Lord Duncan, Mr. Duncan, Lady Jane, and several other Lords and Ladies honoured my little chapel at

Digitized by Google

Fulham with their presence. Lord Duncan's behaviour throughout the whole service was devout and edifying.

We have been removed to this place about a fortnight, and have seen most of our very intimate friends. Lord and Lady Cremorne have been remarkably well till within this week, when they have caught London colds, and have gone to nurse them a few days in the country. Mrs. Carter, in her eightieth year, is looking quite blooming and beautiful, and seems to enjoy better health and to suffer less pain than for several years past. I wish we could hear the same good accounts of you; but there have been evil reports about you, which have alarmed and grieved us not a little, and indeed compelled me to write and inquire after you sooner than I otherwise should have done, having not yet struggled through that load of business which always overwhelms me on my first coming to town.

You see the King has given £20,000 to the subscription at the bank; but the subscription goes on at present but slowly; still I think it will ultimately succeed, and gradually extend itself to *all* ranks of people, which is very much to be desired, for it is *numbers* more than the large sums of a few individuals that must render it considerable. I was at the bank on Saturday to contribute my own quota, and saw several lady subscribers, and even servants sending small sums collected among themselves of from ten to fifteen pounds. This example I hope will spread, for it appears to me of infinite

Digitized by Google

consequence to the security of this country, that this subscription should rise to a very large amount. Part of 'Will Chip,' or a similar pamphlet under a different name might be of infinite service on this occasion, and might spread the subscription like wild-fire through the kingdom in a moment. Pray *do* try; if I were at Bath I should once more exert my powers of persuasion. You must not plead bad health, and I hope you *cannot*. You well know that the more aching your head is, the brighter is your imagination—that the vigour of your mind is in an inverse ratio to the strength of your body; and that the more cracks there are in your constitution, the stronger is the blaze of genius that bursts through them;—without a joke, I am confident that at this moment your pen might work wonders, and perhaps contribute, under providence, to save your country.

Pray relieve us by a single line from the fears we really entertain respecting your health, and accept the sincerest esteem and affection of

Your friend,

B. LONDON.

From the same to the same.

Fulham, June 1798.

MY DEAR MRS. MORE,

You are by this time, I hope, safely lodged at Cowslip Green, and are enjoying the delightful rains which succeeded the intense heat you experienced here. The weather has undergone as

Digitized by Google

complete a revolution as if it was just come from Paris. I meant to have begun mowing to-morrow, but now it must be postponed till—I do not know when.

I had a letter from Mason, some little time before his death, in which he said he would make no addition to any of his poems, which he affirmed were of the true lyric dimensions, and could not be mended. He therefore recommended that whichever you chose should be formed into a penny or half-penny poesy. He thought 'Patient Joe' admirable, and that it contained the best part of dramatic excellence, an unexpected and happy catastrophe. He proposed for it the tune of the 'Miller of Mansfield.' 'How happy a state does the Miller possess.'

Believe me,

Your's ever,

B. LONDON.

From the same to the same.

Fulham, 1798.

MY DEAR MRS. MORE,

Since you went from hence, we have made a considerable progress in the late Lord Orford's works, and have been alternately entertained and offended, pleased and disgusted. His original vein of playful humour and pleasantry runs through the whole, but it is mingled with a much larger proportion of profaneness and indelicacy than I

Digitized by Google

should have expected, from the casual intercourse and conversation which I have had with him, in which he was always decent and correct. I am sorry to say that he omits no opportunity of burlesquing Scripture, religion, and the clergy. On my friend Archbishop Secker he is particularly severe, so much so, that it is my resolution not to pass it over without notice in some way or other. Half of the letters which fill the fifth volume might have been omitted, as trifling and uninteresting. Those to you are, I think, beyond comparison the best, and I wish they had printed the whole. If they had done this, and omitted a large part of the rest, and all the indecent and irreligious pieces, which are but few and short, with all the incidental passages, which are indelicate or profane, it would have been an inoffensive and amusing book. As it is, it will shock the good, and encourage the bad. When you come to read it, you will confirm my verdict by your own. In less than a fortnight, I think we shall finish all we intend to read, and it shall then be conveyed to you with another small book that has just been sent here for you.

We are now in the midst of our hay, and a most delightful season we have had for it. Hitherto not a drop of rain, and all the appearance of a continuance of fine weather.

Mr. Pitt has been very seriously ill, but is now, thank God, recovering. We wait with anxiety for news from Ireland, (where the rebellion seems by no means quelled,) and from Lord St. Vincent and the Toulon fleet. God grant it may be good! Our

Digitized by Google

best and kindest wishes and thanks for your visit attend you. Compliments to your sisters.

Ever your's
Very sincerely and affectionately,
B. LONDON.

From Mr. Pepys to Mrs. H. More.

Wimpole Street, 1798.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The subject for which you desire some hints is no doubt one of great importance, but perhaps what Robinson had said upon it, added to what may be found in Chapone on Conversation, may be thought to have nearly exhausted it. What I wished *you* to insist upon principally, is the very extensive influence which your sex might have on ours, by an active and judicious use of every fair opportunity to discountenance vice, and encourage the profession of virtuous principles. I judge of the good they might do, by the mischief which I see is produced in the minds of young men, as well as young women, by inattention, (to say no worse) in those whose opinions are considered as of weight, either from the rank which they hold in the fashionable world, or as distinguished for talents and understanding. I cannot but think, that if many a young and beautiful woman could be made to see in a strong point of light, the extent of her influence either to do good or to do evil, it might awaken the consciences of some to exert themselves in the cause of virtue, and deter others from affording that countenance to

Digitized by Google

vice, which is given by discovering too plainly, that it is not wholly disagreeable to those, who in words profess themselves the patronesses of virtue. These observations would apply, I think, still more strongly to religion than morality, and, perhaps, if it could be fully known to your sex, how little amiable an *esprit fort* appears even to the profligate in ours, it might operate as a check to a certain habitual persiflage (as the French call it) which pervades the conversation of some ladies, in other respects highly amiable. As this subject has often engaged my attention, I have seen with concern the progress which this turn of mind will make in a very short time; nay, I could tell you some of the watch-words by which I have observed the first indications of it. Observe only, whether after you have heard a lady begin to speak of the clergy, under the appellation of the *parsons*, you do not in a short time hear Christianity spoken of as *a particular system*, &c. If this sort of language and conduct were used only by women whose characters were decidedly vicious, though still admitted into society, it would be of far less importance; but I fear it will be found that too many give into it, who would be sorry to find themselves upon the list of the enemies, either of religion or morality. No one who does not enter into the feelings of a young man, can conceive how much less formidable the ridicule of all the *men* in the world would be, than that of the *women* with whom he happens to be acquainted; and I dare say, if a man had worked himself up from a sense of religion to that high pitch of heroism which would be neces-

Digitized by Google

sary to decline the risk of murder in fighting a duel, he would be still in the utmost danger of relapsing into the usual pusillanimity on such occasions, were it to be represented to him, that no woman would hereafter receive him but with contempt. It would therefore be a considerable addition to the great and extensive good done by your writings, if you could impress upon the minds of our fair country-women, that their sphere of doing good is far more extensive than they imagine.

God bless you in this and every other exertion of your admirable talents, to serve and please him.

Your's most affectionately,

W. W. PEPYS.

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

August 15, 1798.

I have been wishing to write to you, to thank you for sending the Dykes, whom we much liked. He preached at Cheddar, and dropped a word after P——'s sermon at night. I have many things to say, partly in answer to your kind and very encouraging letter, which served to strengthen my faith, and cheer my spirits—partly to tell you of our goings on, and chiefly to inquire after your wife and son; but I must defer all I have to tell you till I am better able to say it, and confine myself to say a word on the great mercies of God to myself. I went last week to Wedmore, the new place, and believe I spent too much time in a damp half-

Digitized by Google

finished house,[1] which we are about taking, giving directions to have it finished to our purpose.

I was attacked with one of my violent spasms in my head on the Saturday night, so that I could not go with the Dykes the Sunday round, but Patty did. This pain continued almost intolerable during two days and two nights, and left my nerves in a high state of irritation. On Monday, being alone, I fell down from the place where I was sitting, in a fainting fit. I dashed my face against the corner of a stone wall, and lay a very long time without giving any signs of life. My sisters found me in a posture which must soon have suffocated me,—with my face frightfully disfigured, and the floor sprinkled with blood. There was a strong contest between life and death, but it pleased my merciful God to raise me up. I was a good while before I had any clear ideas, but felt a sort of stupid serenity; no emotion, but a general feeling that I had not done enough for God; and what would poor Patty do by herself? I am so disfigured, you would scarcely know me; but I am full of gratitude; for though my eyes make me look a perfect Mrs. Mendoza, yet the sight is safe, and had not my face received the bruises, my skull must have been fractured. You will be glad to hear that my mind has been very calm, and that I felt that this visitation was in mercy. I write this, two or three lines at a time, and cannot see to read it; but the bruises, though very bad, are nothing; they will in

[1] One of her schools.

Digitized by Google

time disappear; but I must try to get my nerves in a better way. I have a dull pain in my head which is very unpleasant. I must just tell you that we have kept possession of the pulpit at Wedmore ever since, and sent one of our own clergy every Sunday, to keep up the attention to our plan. Last Sunday, Drewitt preached an hour; after he had finished, the clerk got up and said, 'The parish are desired to meet next Friday, to consult on the best means of opposing the ladies who are coming to set up a school.'

Bold Drewitt, nothing dismayed, stood up instantly in the pulpit, and said, 'And on Sunday next, the parish are desired to meet the ladies, who intend opening the school at nine o'clock;' but I now doubt if I shall be able; it will be a hard-run contest; and whether John Barrow or Hannah More will be the successful candidate, I have not the least idea.

My love to Mrs. W. and Mrs. K. I have the comfort of being sure of your prayers.

God bless you,

H. More.

P. S. Pray observe, that Barrow is he who was afraid his ploughmen would be made saints, and whose wife is the fatalist.

From the Rev. J. Newton to Mrs. H. More.

December 12, 1798.

My very dear Madam,

Miss Lambert told me last night that you had been very ill, and were at present but slowly reco-

Digitized by Google

vering; but another lady gave me hopes to-day that it was a mistake. I well know that fame, with her hundred mouths, tells a hundred fibs, and I can give little credit to rumours, till I see them confirmed in the gazette. However, as it is some time since I indulged myself in the pleasure of writing to you, I embrace this occasion, in hope that some of these days you may find leisure to inform me, under your own hand, how you and your good sisters are.

Fame has been busy about me likewise. It has been said by some, that I had had three successive fits; by others that I was confined by a fever; and some thought proper to affirm that I was dead. I compare the art of spreading rumours, to the art of pin-making. There is usually some truth, which I call the wire; as this passes from hand to hand, one gives it a polish, another a point; others make and put on the head, and at last the pin is completed. My health and spirits have been, and still are, as good as ever; but on the twenty-third of last month, I found by repeated falls while I was dressing myself, that the strength of my left leg was withdrawn. For three or four days, I could not walk across the room without support. I kept house the Sunday following. This was the wire of the pin; all the additions were invented or conjectured. It is my happiness to have a praying people, and I ascribe it to the Lord's goodness, in answer to the prayers of my friends, that a blessing attended the means used for my relief, and I was only kept one day from St. Mary's. I really thought at first it

Digitized by Google

might be the Lord's pleasure to confine me to the house for the rest of my days, that I might myself try to practise the lessons of patience and resignation to the will of God, which I have often recommended to others from the pulpit. I may thank him that such a prospect did not distress me. I was enabled to see and to feel that I am not my own; that he who bought me with his blood, has a right to dispose of me, and to say, go here, or sit there, as he sees best; and farther, that his sovereign authority is combined with infinite mercy, and that he has promised to choose and manage far better for me, than I could choose for myself, if permitted. I aimed and still aim to say from my heart, *what*, *when*, and *how* thou wilt. My sins and follies banished me to the house of bondage in Africa, where I was the scorn and pity of slaves. From thence he redeemed me when I knew him not,—when I defied him. He has since given me a name and a place amongst his children. My case has been singular.

Surely he has done enough to demand and to warrant the simple surrender of myself and my all to him. And now I am old, and know not the day of my death, my chief solicitude and prayer is, that my decline in life may be consistent with my character and profession as a Christian and a minister; that it may not be stained with those infirmities which have sometimes clouded the latter days even of good men. May he preserve me from a garrulous and from a dogmatical spirit; from impatience, peevishness, and jealousy. If called to depart or to

Digitized by Google

be laid aside, may I retire like a thankful guest from a plentiful table; rejoicing that others are coming forward to serve him, I hope better, when I can serve him in this life no more; and then, at length, when flesh and blood are fainting, if he will deign to smile upon me, I shall smile upon death. This is all I have to ask for my own personal concern, and to this purpose I request a remembrance in your prayers. I will repay you as I am able in the same way. It is a serious thing to die, and it becomes me now, far in my seventy-fourth year, to think seriously of it. Through mercy I can contemplate the transition without dismay. But I well know, that if this last enemy; or rather to a believer, this kind messenger, should actually approach, unless the Lord supported me, I should prove a coward, though now, while I am in health, and quietly smoking my pipe, and he seems at a distance, I can think, write, or speak of him without anxiety. There is a dying strength needful to bear up the soul in a dying hour. The Lord has said, "as thy day, so shall thy strength be," and "my grace is sufficient for thee." On these good words I would humbly rely, for indeed in myself I am nothing, and can do nothing, and without his gracious influence I am alike unfit to die or to live.

My dear brother Cecil is thought to be in a dangerous way, that is, in danger of exchanging earth for heaven. The physicians judge it to be an inaccessible disorder in an intestine. The effect is a violent and almost incessant pain in the back and loins. He cannot remain long in one posture; he can

Digitized by Google

neither stand, walk, nor lie down, without a change. But his mind is peaceful and resigned. It is a heavy blow upon his people, and heavily felt; but I do not give him up. Much prayer is made for him, and though physicians shake their heads, and medicines seem to fail, we know who can restore him by a word. "To God the Lord belong the issues from death." His life seems to us very important; and if we know what we ask, the Lord will raise him up. If otherwise, he can give us submission to his will, which is always wise and good. Though useful ministers are successively removed, the Lord is still with us. There is a pleasing prospect of a number of young men who we hope will prove faithful and able in the established church. This is a token for good in these turbulent and degenerate times. The Lord has still a remnant among us, scattered up and down the land like salt, who mourn for their sins and the sins of others. Without these, our nation would be soon in a state of putrefaction. But, for their sakes, and in answer to their prayers, Almighty God has given us a great victory by Admiral Nelson, and has since disconcerted the designs of the French upon Ireland. The religion which alone can save the state, is now reproached and stigmatized by a name, which though undefined, has a magical force, and I believe there are those who would be well content, if all who profess it were safely settled in New Holland. So the inhabitants of Sodom were weary of Lot, though the destruction of their city was only retarded by his continuance

Digitized by Google

in it, and on the very day he was removed they all perished.

The afternoon lectureship of St. Giles-in-the-Fields is vacant. The candidate most likely to have the majority of votes is a Mr. Sheppard, who was sometime Mr. Cadogan's curate at Reading. The Bishop of Chichester is rector of the parish; and we are told that he inquired his character of the Bishop of London, who had no knowledge of him. I was desired to write to the bishop; but this was a liberty I did not think myself warranted to take; though his lordship has upon several occasions given me pleasing proofs of his favourable opinion; and I have little doubt but he would credit my testimony if it came properly before him. But if you, my dear Madam, when you write to him, should choose to mention Mr. Sheppard's application as a piece of the news of the day, and that your correspondent J. N. assured you that he has known Mr. S. several years, and believes him to be an upright moderate man, a good and diligent preacher, and a firm friend to our constitution in church and state, it might perhaps have a good effect towards fixing such a man in a pulpit where the afternoon congregation is between two and three thousand. To say that Mr. S. is unprovided for, and that the income of the lectureship would be helpful to the maintenance of his family, are considerations of a very inferior importance.

I am again in the press; when I shall get out of it depends on Mr. Bensley, the printer. When

Digitized by Google

I was at Southampton this autumn, I finished a work, which though but a small one, and begun three or four years ago, I should never have finished at home,—my engagements and interruptions are so many. I think it will come abroad early in next year, under the title of 'Memoirs of the Life of the late W. Grimshaw.' He was an extraordinary man. He was removed to a better world in the year 1763; but I have been enabled to glean up several authentic particulars, which, I think, are worthy of being recorded, to the praise of Him whose he was, and whom he served. I have given the book, wholly and for ever, to the Society for the Relief of the poor and pious Clergy. And I believe I may call this my '*extremum laborem.*' I am sometimes almost ashamed to think I have written so much. This book will make the twelfth volume in duodecimo; yet it has pleased God to give some of my publications acceptance with the people, and therefore I have cause to be thankful. They have been spread far and wide; published in England, Ireland, Scotland, and America, and in the German and Low Dutch languages. How wonderful that he should so honour the African blasphemer! But there is a time to write, and a time to desist from writing. I may say, as the late Bishop of London, Dr. Lowth, said to me, 'I cannot do as I wish, nor as I have done. The shadows of the evening are advancing upon me. But while I can use my pen or my tongue, I know who has a right to their service.' If I ever see Mendip again, it must be by a bird's-eye view from the higher hill of Zion,

Digitized by Google

above. But, I trust, I shall at intervals recollect with pleasure the happy week I passed at Cowslip Green, while I can remember any thing.

May you and all the ladies accept my repeated thanks for all the kindness I have received from you, and if we never all meet together in the flesh, I hope we shall often meet at a throne of grace while upon earth, and hereafter before the throne of glory, and join in the songs of unceasing praise "to him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood."

I am most sincerely,

Your affectionate and much obliged,

JOHN NEWTON.

From Mrs. H. More to Mrs. Kennicott.

Bath, 1798.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I thought we never parted in any spring with resolutions of doing better; and it is clear, that in no summer have we ever done worse. Indeed I did not wait till you 'spoke first,' but rather until I could find an opportunity of speaking. I have been unconscionably worked and harassed this year, and have seldom had less ability to bear it. My illness was a fainting away, brought on by acute head-aches; and, being alone, I fell down and dashed my face with great violence against a stone wall. Providentially some one soon came to me, or, from the posture in which I fell, I must have been suffocated. My face was greatly bruised, and I still

Digitized by Google

bear the marks; but happily, my face received the blows: had the back part of my head received them, it must have fractured my skull. The pains in my head continued, without any interval, for several weeks; but I thank God I am now restored to nearly my old state, that is, I have them only about two or three days in a week. Though I have been boasting of this improved condition of health, our dear friend Wilberforce did not think it a thing to be boasted of; and he, having been down with his wife to pass a few days with me at Cowslip Green, has brought me away almost by force, to take a short course of the waters, while the weather is mild, preparatory to my drinking them, when we come to settle for the winter. So I am staying with him for ten days or a fortnight.

As to my book, about which you inquire, I have had too little leisure to devote to it, and it stood almost quite still, from illness, for near six weeks. I have, however, made a considerable progress in it, so that I hope I shall get it off my hands in the winter. I ought not to expect it to be popular, for besides many faults, it has the capital one of attacking the reigning system of manners and education, so that it must necessarily give offence to many.

I feel it rather base in myself to steal off and leave poor Patty to work double tides. We have in hand a new and very laborious undertaking, laborious on account of its great distance from home. But the object appeared to me so important that I did not feel myself at liberty to neglect it. It is a parish,

Digitized by Google

the largest in our county or diocese, in a state of great depravity and ignorance. The opposition I have met with in endeavouring to establish an institution for the religious instruction of these people would excite your astonishment. The principal adversary is a farmer of £1000. a-year, who says, the lower class are *fated* to be wicked and ignorant, and that, as wise as I am, I cannot alter what is *decreed*. He has laboured to ruin the poor curate for favouring our cause, and says, he shall not have a workman to obey him, for I shall make them all as wise as himself. In spite of this hostility, however, which far exceeds anything I have met with, I am building a house, and taking up things on such a large scale, that you must not be surprised if I get into gaol for debt, (even should I escape it for my irregular proceedings, which is the most to be feared;) as, notwithstanding the kind and generous legacy of my dear and lamented Mrs. Bouverie, my schemes will suffer greatly by her death, as her purse was my sure resort in all difficulties. Providence, I trust, will carry me through the business of this new undertaking, for in spite of the active malevolence we experience, I have brought already between three and four hundred under a course of instruction: the worst part of the story is, that thirty miles there and back, is a little too much these short days; and when we get there, our house has as yet neither windows nor doors; but if we live till next summer, things will mend, and in so precarious a world as this is, a winter was not be lost! It rather brings about some of our worldly

Digitized by Google

clergy in two or three parishes, when they see that we labour strenuously to attach our people to the state as well as to the church.

All lights and laurels, and ringing and singing here! What blessed victories! O that men would therefore praise the Lord for his goodness!

Your's truly,

H. More.

From Mrs. H. More to her sister.

London, 1798.

I have at last accomplished one quiet day with Mrs. Boscawen. I greatly feared I should have gone out of town without it, which I should have thought a grievous thing. She is still very weak, and I was so glad to see her once more, that I staid with her till eleven o'clock, nor was my fidelity shaken, though I had an invitation to Mrs. Montagu's, and to Gloucester House.

Yesterday I dined with Lord Kenyon, the Bishop of Lincoln, and some others, at our good Bishop's in St. James's Square.

H. More.

To the same.

London, 1798.

I wound up my adventures royally last night by passing the evening at Gloucester House. Nothing could be more pleasant, lively, and kind, than the Duchess and Princess Sophia, the former gave me

Digitized by Google

a quantity of worsted of her own spinning, for us to knit for the poor. She is much amused with the Memoirs of Sir Robert Walpole, and wanted to lend them me, but I could not venture to attack three formidable quartos on the last day of my stay. It is an entertaining work, and restores in some degree the character of this famous minister, whom it has been the fashion to attack, and to whom scarcely common justice has ever been done before. Every one speaks highly of this work. Old Lord Mendip, and those who lived at that period, are particularly pleased with it.

H. More.

Mrs. Hannah More had by this time entirely withdrawn herself from her multifarious intercourse with her friends in London, and contented herself with residing two months in each year in its neighbourhood; dividing her time between her friends Mrs. Garrick, Bishop Porteus, Lord Teignmouth, Mr. H. Thornton, Mr. Hoare, and some few others. She likewise made an annual visit to Lord Barham, for one month, during many years; and was frequently at the house of the Bishop of Durham, at Mongewell.

This year, 1798, was solemnized to her soul by much spiritual communion, and much self-examination, which issued in a series of pious meditations, holy resolutions, earnest supplications for inward strength, and self-abasing avowals of conscious weakness; from the following extracts no Christian with a humble heart can rise without feeling

Digitized by Google

his acquaintance with himself improved, his sympathies engaged, and his better part enlarged, elevated, and confirmed.

January 1, 1798.—Having obtained help of God, I continue to this day. Lord, I am spared, while others are cut off. Let me now dedicate myself to thee with a more entire surrender than I have ever yet made.

First. I resolve by the grace of God to be more watchful over my temper. 2ndly. Not to speak rashly or harshly. 3dly. To watch over my thoughts: not to indulge in vain, idle, resentful, impatient, worldly imaginations. 4thly. To strive after closer communion with God. 5thly. To let no hour pass without lifting up my heart to Him through Christ. 6thly. Not to let a day pass without some thought of death. 7thly. To ask myself every night when I lie down, am I fit to die? 8thly. To labour to do and to suffer the whole will of God. 9thly. To cure my over-anxiety, by casting myself on God in Christ.

Sunday, January 7.—I will *confess* my sins—*Repent* of them.—Plead the atonement.—Resolve to love God and Christ.—Implore the aid of the Spirit for light, strength, and direction.—Examine if these things are done.—Be humbled for my failures.—Watch and pray.

Through death the Christian's soul goes to—1st. Perfect purity. 2ndly. Fulness of joy. 3dly. Everlasting freedom. 4thly. Perfect rest. 5thly. Health and fruition. 6thly. Complete security. 7thly. Substantial and eternal good.

Digitized by Google

Sunday, January 21.—Up late last night—much harassed all the week by worldly company. My temper hurt—heart secularized. I had looked forward to a peaceful Sunday—instead of this, an acute head-ache. Spent the day in bed—little devotion—no spirituality. Could not even *think* at all. Had an hour's talk with Mr. Wilberforce—had reason to bless God, that in my present difficulties, this wise Christian friend was at hand to counsel and comfort me. Lord, grant that my many religious advantages may never appear against me. Many temptations this week to vanity. My picture asked for two publications. Dedications—flattery without end. God be praised, I *was not* flattered, but vexed—twenty-four hours' head-ache makes one see the vanity of all this! Am I tempted to vanity? let me call to mind what shining friends I have lost this year—each eminent in his different way, yet he that is least in the kingdom of grace is greater than they.

I resolved at the beginning of the year, to pray at least twice a week, separately for the country, in this time of danger, independently of the petitions offered up in my other prayers.

Sunday, January 28.—I indulge too much in the thought, how much better I might be, had I fewer interruptions, more opportunity of vital preachers, more pious friends, less worldly company. There is great self-deceit in all this. Am I praying against these disadvantages? Do I make the most of the rest of my time? Lord, assist me to do so, and to bear patiently what I dislike. This week

Digitized by Google

I have watched my words more, but not sufficiently my thoughts. * * * * Heard of John Wilkes's death—awful event! talents how abused! Lord, who hath made *me* to differ; but for thy grace, I might have blasphemed thee like him. In early youth I read Hume, Voltaire, Rousseau, &c. I am a monument of mercy, not to have made shipwreck of my faith.

February 2.—My birth-day. Lord, grant I may never have cause to say, "it were good for me had I never been born." Lord, forgive the sins of my youth—they have pressed on me this day. Blot them from thy book, and give me grace to subdue my remaining corruptions. O how strong!

* * * Preparing for London. Oh! that I were as anxious to forget nothing relating to the next world, as I am to omit nothing I shall want in this journey.

Heard —— preach—elegant language,—earnest and bold, but nothing to the heart; no food for perishing sinners. Lord, send more labourers into thy vineyard! Increase the number of those who preach Christ Jesus, and salvation through him only.

Sunday, February 25.—Came last night to Fulham Palace. Lord, while I admire these Christian friends, let me not over-rate any child of man. Christ is *all*. Oh, for a fuller persuasion of this!

Teston, March 1.—Arrived here on Monday—seriously ill all the way. How many suffer painful journies, who find no rest for the sole of the foot at night—but I rest with kind Christian friends,

Digitized by Google

and find every comfort and alleviation. Several bad nights—violent cough—not comforted by religious, but tormented by worldly thoughts. Oh, for a sanctified suffering! Merciful Father, withdraw not thy heavy hand, until thy work of sanctification is done in my soul.

* * While attending on the dying-bed of Mrs. —— I did not feel my heart properly affected. Oh, that I may lay to heart this lesson of mortality! Lord, prepare me for this state of pain, weakness, imbecility; if it be thy will I should pass through it. She is dead. I too must die. Oh! that I could learn to die daily; and then I should look without fear to the dark valley which lies before me.

March 25.—Tempted to be warm in politics. Under the mask of religion, I fear I indulge my own humours and resentments. I would learn of Him who was meek and lowly. I cannot fix my thoughts intently on death, according to my resolution. Death advances, but I do not advance in my preparation for it.

Monday, April 2.—My attention has not wandered so much as usual, but my heart has not been deeply touched. I am about to leave this place. Lord, forgive what I have neglected to do, and what I have done, and if any little good has been done by me, be pleased graciously to accept it, and forgive its imperfection. Mrs. B—— gave me largely for my poor. Lord, bless her, and make all her bed in her sickness! Strengthen her faith. Remove the prejudices that impede her comforts.

Digitized by Google

Support her through life. Be her support in death, and if we never meet again here, grant that we may meet in the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

London, Sunday, April 15.—I have been a week here—hurried—worldly—with little serious reading—less serious thoughts, except when I lie awake in the night: this is often a comfortable time with me—the world shut out—my conscience more tender—my memory more quick in bringing my sins before me. My temper is sorely tried. Yesterday I was tempted to anger—to-day I bore the provocation. Teach me to subdue all anger, Lord, and not to think I am helping thy cause when I am angry. Oh, that I could learn of him who was meek and lowly! Had a little serious talk with the Duchess of Gloucester, Lady Amherst, and the Duchess of Beaufort. Lord, let me be no mean respecter of persons, but make me valiant for thy truth.

Sunday 29.—Had a bad head-ache all day—nothing done for God—in pain my religion vacillates; I trust I am tolerably patient and resigned; yet not as becomes a disciple of the suffering Jesus. This week has been nearly passed in visiting—little reading, or seriousness—a few occasions, indeed, were snatched to talk seriously to young Christians, and I bore my testimony pretty strongly in company with some learned sceptics. At another time too much carried away with the pleasure of talking on mere subjects of taste—have taken too much pains to shine, and too much pleasure to hear my taste commended on the subject of French litera-

Digitized by Google

ture. Spent three days at Mitcham—felt the joy of pious society. I fear I do not profit enough when I get with pious people—it evaporates in self-satisfied feelings, and serious talk, without reaching the heart.

I feel full of schemes of charity—of doing good—of promoting God's glory—of writing for usefulness, not fame: yet I take little comfort in these evidences, because I do not feel the love of Christ constraining me.

Sunday, May 20.—My journal stopped a fortnight—busy in getting forward my 'Strictures on Education.'

This week has been too much spent in receiving visits from the great. Lord, preserve me from these temptations to vanity. Oh! let me feel more and more that I am a miserable sinner.

May 21.—A present of Lord Orford's work—my picture in the book—I laboured to hinder it. Lord, keep me from self-sufficiency, and humble me under a deep sense of the emptiness of earthly honours. He had all *this* world could give—great, witty, brilliant—of how little importance are these things now. "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." Grant me this purity, and an utter indifference to fame, and deadness to the world.

June 4.—Much painful feeling at Pitt's duel. Lord, show these *wise* men the gospel, that in thy light they may see light, for without that the wisest sit in darkness.

Sunday, June 10.—Went to Nailsea,—Lord, fill my heart with gratitude for the blessings of this

Digitized by Google

day. Found all flourishing. One hundred and forty children—taught the scriptures to three poor young colliers.

Many strangers came to see me this week. I bless God this raised in me no vanity; nor did a flattering history of me in a public print: I desire "*that* honour which cometh from God only."

Sunday, August 26.—By the mercy of God I am permitted to write once more. Lord, grant that my life thus graciously spared, may be spent more vigorously to thy glory.—On the 13th, after two days severe head-ache, fell down in a violent fit—dashed my face against the wall, and lay long seemingly dead—much bruised and disfigured; have lain by above a fortnight almost useless; violent pains in my head, loss of sleep. Grant, Lord, that as my outward man decays, I may be renewed in the spirit of my mind. I have lost all this time from my book, and have redeemed too little of it by serious thought. Oh! for that happy state, where is neither sorrow nor crying!

A fresh proof of human depravity has, I hope, brought me nearer to God. I have been driven nearer to him, and have had more comfort in prayer; but still I am not enough renewed in the spirit of my mind. Lord, perfect what is lacking in my faith and love, and let me "possess my soul in patience." Refine my zeal, purify my motives, lead me to act with a holy simplicity, leaving the event to thee who doest all things well. Oh for purer, holier converse; more disentanglement from the world! more heavenly meditation.

Digitized by Google

Saturday, September 22.—Head seldom free from pain.—Pain does not yet purify my heart, though my gracious Father purposes it for that end.—Lord, sanctify pain to me: make me as willing to *suffer* thy will as to *do* it.—Company *every* day, *all* day; chiefly good people, but so much company unspiritualizes my mind, and swallows up time.—Book goes on slowly.—Cheap Repository is closed. "Bless the Lord, O my soul!" that I have been spared to accomplish that work! Do thou, O Lord, bless and prosper it to the good of many, and if it do good, may I give to thee the glory, and take to myself the shame of its defects. I have devoted three years to this work. Two millions of these tracts disposed of during the first year!—God works by weak instruments, to show that the glory is all his own.

Sunday, September 30.—Have had more communion with God lately—especially in the night-watches.—Thoughts more called off from worldly things, and less vexed by disappointments; still I find it hard to fix my mind on God and eternity by day; I had rather *work* for God than *meditate* on him; yet this divine communion is the work of heaven, and how shall I be prepared but by this?

Sunday, November 18.—Returned from Bath in an improved state of health, as I thought; but health being doubtless not good for me, had a return of my head-ache.—I might turn the time lost from more active duties, to good account, by secret communion with my God and Saviour, but alas! this is too little the case—partly, indeed, that

Digitized by Google

the intense pain in my head deprives me of the free exercise of thought, and gives an involuntary gloom and depression to my spirits, but more, I fear, from a habit of not sufficiently watching over my thoughts at other times. It is a grievous truth that I am in general least religious when I am sick.—Lord, do thou give me grace to improve these seasons!

December 2.—Vain thoughts discompose my own mind, and evil tempers show me the emptiness of that flattery with which I am at times overwhelmed. Lord, I hope I can say that I derive little pleasure from such praises, while my heart tells me how little I deserve them.—I compare myself with the purity of thy law, and then I see my own sinfulness too plainly to be pleased by flattering words.—Heard of a silly and humiliating history of myself just published, and can truly say it gave me little or no mortification; nor did I feel any desire to contradict it.

Sunday, December 23.—Ill above a week with violent cough—blistered, &c.—by the grace of God I am resigned to pain, but my thoughts, which ought at such times to be devoted to heavenly things, are not always in my own power—they wander amidst the vanities and cares of earth, instead of being directed straight forward to the goal to which I am tending. Lord, raise my grovelling affections to thyself—disperse these earthly vapours which obscure my faith—increase my desires after that world where sin and sorrow will be done away!

An awful dispensation! the curate of —— visited with sudden blindness for three days—It seems to

Digitized by Google

have been a supernatural awakening. Lord, do thou perfect this work; do thou call this man out of darkness to thy marvellous light, for his own sake, and the sake of those many souls over whom he is set!

Heard of the dangerous illness of Mr. Cecil— Lord, I bless thee that thou hast enabled this faithful servant to bear his agonies as a Christian, and that his sufferings have not slackened his faith. Raise him up, if it be thy will, for farther usefulness; but if not, sustain him in his last conflict, and enable him to bear his dying testimony to thy faithfulness and truth; and do thou supply his place so that his people shall not miss his services.

December 31.—I am now, by the great mercy of God, brought to the end of another year. Lord, enable me to consider this mercy as I ought to do, and do thou strengthen my memory to recollect the numberless favours I have received at thy hands, during the course of it. Enable me to call to mind my trials, and to lament my sins of the past year. Lord, forgive whatever fresh guilt I have contracted. O wash me clean in the blood of the everlasting covenant; forgive whatever I have done amiss—whatever I have neglected to do. Supply all my wants out of thine abundant mercies. Strengthen my weakness, subdue my pride, heal my self-love, root out my evil tempers, deliver me from open anger, secret resentments, and discontents; deliver me from myself, from the corruptions of my own evil heart, from the suggestions of unbelief; and do thou sanctify to me the mercies

Digitized by Google

and deliverances of the past year. Thou hast preserved my colleague and myself from many dangers. Thou hast preserved our going out and our coming in at unseasonable hours. Thou hast carried us through much labour of body, and much anxiety of mind. Thou hast blest in no common degree, our unworthy labours in thy cause—thou hast in some degree owned our endeavours.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER X.

ABOUT this time, 1799, the 'Strictures on Female Education,' issued from the pen of Hannah More; her third ethical publication in prose, and one of the most powerful pieces of her artillery, from whose calibre were sent those bolts which shattered the towers and arsenals of fashionable abuses and follies. The testimonies which were borne to the value of this admirable performance were so numerous, that room can only be spared for a comparatively small part of them. A few of them shall be offered to the reader, who will not be sorry to see spread before him some specimens of cordial and well-deserved eulogy, proceeding from a variety of distinguished persons, and bearing the impress of their several peculiarities of phrase and sentiment.

From Mrs. Carter to Mrs. H. More.

1799.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

It must have appeared very strange, that I have not sooner thanked you for your kind and most

Digitized by Google

valuable present, but indeed, through my almost continual head-aches, which have affected my spirits, I have found writing a difficult task. To you who are secure of the approbation of angels, human applause is of small consequence, but you must be pleased for the sake of others, that your most excellent work is so universally read and admired, and I trust will on many produce a suitable effect. It is surely a hopeful symptom, that though you and the Bishop of London so strongly oppose the false maxims and absurd conduct of this giddy and nonsensical world, your endeavours are treated with the greatest attention and respect.

Of Mrs. Montagu, I am happy to be able to give a more comfortable account. She is in perfect good health and spirits, though she has totally changed her mode of life, from a conviction that she exerted herself too much last year, and that it brought on the long illness by which she suffered so much. She never goes out except to take the air of a morning; has no company to dinner, (I do not call myself company) lets in nobody in the evening, which she passes in hearing her servant read, as, alas! her eyes will not suffer her to read to herself. I flatter myself that this pause of exertion will restore her to us, and will help to prolong her life; and that a taste for the comfort of living quietly, will for the future prevent her from mixing so much with the tumults of the world as to injure her health.

I beg to be kindly remembered to your good sisters. Adieu, my dear friend, may God restore

Digitized by Google

your health, and long continue you an example and an instructor to the world.

I am,

Ever your most obliged and affectionate,

E. CARTER.

From Mrs. Chapone to Mrs. H. More.

1799.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I can never pay you the thanks so much your due, for your invaluable present. Believe me, I am truly sensible of the honour you have done me, and contemplate without envy, and with entire satisfaction, those eternal honours you have laid up for yourself. You most successfully practise the art of pleasing and entertaining, whilst you instruct, and even whilst you rebuke; and I hope better things of the world than one lady predicted, who said, 'Everybody will read her, everybody admire her, and nobody mind her.' I have been in a state of mind that could take in nothing but mere amusement, and hardly that, till your admirable book found its way to my heart, in spite of the weakness and confusion of my head. My sister Mulso (who has been extremely ill) could literally read nothing, till you awakened her intelligence. She is now reading your book with rapture. My dear Mrs. Burrows, (though now settled at Hadley, where she has been nursing Miss Burrows) deserted me not in my utmost need, but begged a bed elsewhere, and gave her days to me for a fortnight. She has

Digitized by Google

since made me a second visit, on my second loss, and was a great support under both. Indeed all my friends have been wonderfully kind to me, particularly my dear Pepys, who has been the most attentive, affectionate friend, and his brother a most kind and generous physician. Good Mrs. Montagu has shown all the kindness and attention in her power. These things I mention, that you may not think me more desolate than I am. I know that without human help, the Father of mercies can speak peace and comfort to my soul; on Him I rely for the blessing of

'Obedient passions, and a will resigned.'

I have hopes given me that you are soon coming to town, and that your health is improved, and I know you will give me the comfort of seeing you.

I am ever, with the highest esteem,

Your much obliged and affectionate friend,

H. CHAPONE.

From the Bishop of Llandaff, (Dr. Watson,) to Mrs. H. More.

Great George Street, 1799.

MADAM,

I lose no time in returning you my best thanks for the valuable present of your 'Strictures on Female Education.' I received the books yesterday, and being confined by indisposition, have employed this day *usefully* I feel, in perusing them.

Digitized by Google

I do not quite agree with you on some theological points, but I have so little confidence in the rectitude of my own interpretation of Scripture, that I will not enter into any discussion on the subject. Your publication is calculated to do much good. I have put it with great satisfaction into the hands of my daughters, and I hope their piety will prompt them not to be backward in that reciprocation of Christian charity which you, with amiable sincerity and humility, entreat from your readers.

I am, Madam,

Your much obliged servant,

H. LLANDAFF.

From Mr. Charles Burney to Miss H. More.

Chelsea College, April, 1799.

DEAR MADAM,

You doubtless have received flowers, (i. e. flowery letters from your friends) sufficient to form a splendid and fragrant *bouquet,* in which I entreat you to honour my daisy with a place, however unworthy of being admitted in such fine company. The wild and ordinary flowers of the field, can be of no use in such a posey, except *pour donner du relief à l'éclat des autres.*

The subjects of your several chapters are admirably chosen, and treated with a force of sentiment and language which I have not seen equalled since the death of our great and pious moralist, Johnson. The vices, follies, and affectations of the times, how well described! Religion, how well understood and

Digitized by Google

recommended, in the education of your own sex, to which, I am sorry to say, its principles and practices, with a few exceptions, are chiefly confined throughout Europe. Religion alone humanizes us; without it, all morality, benevolence, and social affection would be annihilated in this world, and all hope and fear of the next.

Your strictures on the abuse of music and dancing pleased me much. 'I have long seen that the study of the ornamental and fine arts, has been forced on young persons with and without genius, to such excess, as to vex, fatigue, disgust, and determine them, whenever they become free agents, to abandon all such plagues.

Music is doubtless, in itself, an innocent and necessary domestic amusement for persons of fortune and leisure, but rendered noxious, when studied at the expense of more important things. The late Earl of Holderness, a perfect judge of external propriety, had to my conceptions, a very just idea, while Governor to the Prince of Wales and Duke of York, of the time and importance that should be assigned to the study of music among the great. He told me that 'as soon as these young princes had acquired a sufficient degree of knowledge in more essential studies, he would wish to have my assistance in forming their taste and judgment in music; not to make them fine performers; as in this country, a prince would gain no additional respect and reverence by exhibiting himself as a performer in musical parties. Yet, as it should be their business to patronize arts; if they were

Digitized by Google

ignorant and unable to distinguish excellence from mediocrity, they would disgrace themselves.' His Lordship therefore wished I would read lectures to them, give them specimens of different styles of composition and performance, and make them acquainted with the peculiar merit of each. Music, when it fastens upon enthusiasts, often lays such hold of them, that they think of nothing else. The relation of a great foreign composer and performer at present in this country, on my extolling his genius, told me that 'he was nothing away from the piano-forte, but always looking at it, if one happened to be in his sight, while people were talking to him of other things.'

Children's balls, and the time and importance given to new-fashioned *hops*, you have treated with proper censure and contempt. But, perhaps, you have not seen a party of French or German *Waltz* dancers.

Will you forgive me, dear madam, if I confess that I was a little mortified by the stigma you put upon Italian poetry, in putting it on a level with English sentiment, French philosophy, and German magic wonders. Was it not Italy that taught the rest of Europe all the fine arts; and, indeed, first instructed its inhabitants in the divine principles of Christianity? And in later times, did not Dante, Petrarch, Tasso, Trissino, Tansillo, and Giraldi, furnish models to the poets of other countries? Did not Spenser and our great epic bard avail themselves of the labours of these precursors? And is Metastasio, the most chaste, moral, and pious of all

Digitized by Google

modern poets of a high class, to be thrown into such company? If females are allowed to read or sing poetry of any kind, but particularly dramatic, where are to be found better models of heroism and virtue, more refined sentiments, and more elegance of language and versification, than in his secular dramas, or more piety than in his oratorios, or sacred dramas? Whoever wishes to read divine poetry in a modern language, can find none better than Savinio Matti's translation of the Psalms. If you wish to dissuade young ladies from the study of Italian poetry in general, I could almost take the liberty to intreat you in your next edition, to make a few exceptions in favour of some of those I have mentioned; and in looking again at your first volume, page 164, I perceive that your censure is qualified by the words, *so much* English sentiment, French philosophy, *Italian poetry*,' &c.

What you have said of mental female softness, page 163, put me in mind of Johnson's reply to Mrs. Thrale, who was defending a lady whom he had accused of several species of affectation, by saying, 'But she is soft,' 'Yes, madam,' answered Johnson, 'and so is a pillow.'

Page 119, where you so admirably recommend to parents the encouraging of children to sacrifice the price of their toys, sweet-meats, and finery, in charitable donations to the poor, reminded me of a little natural trait of benevolence in a female child of mine at the play of Jane Shore; who, being in the front of a stage box at a country theatre, and hearing the wretched Jane in vain

Digitized by Google

supplicating 'a morsel to support her famished soul,' and, crying out, 'Give me but to eat!' the child, not five years old, touched with her distress, says, 'Ma'am, will you have my *ollange?*' which the audience applauded much more than the artificial complaints of the actress. And I must add to my little anecdote, that the charitable disposition of this child grew up with her growth, and has never quitted her in maturity.

But what you say in your sixth chapter, of 'filial obedience not being the character of the age,' is so true in these topsy-turvy times, that it seems as much abolished in this country, as nobility and loyalty in France. Parents are now afraid of their children—masters of their servants—and, in State trials, judges of the prisoners. This whole chapter is an excellent sermon on the duty of parents, as well as of children.

I had the pleasure of hearing this morning, (April 6,) in three different places, that your admirable work was alluded to by the Bishop of London, in his sermon at St. James's Church, on Easter Sunday. Our excellent friends, Mr. Langton and Mrs. Carter, were two of my three informants.

Mrs. Boscawen's favourite chapter seems to be the sixteenth. But I shall not attempt to tell you all I think, or all I have heard about your book from people you love, and whose opinions are highly respectable. If your face has not burned lately, there is no truth in old saws. I expect to see your countenance as highly coloured as Bardolph's, by the ignition of distant talkers.

Digitized by Google

Adieu, dear Madam; I make no other apology for the irregularity and frivolity of my remarks, than want of leisure to methodise and try, at least, to mend them; nor for the enormous length of my letter, but that which Garth made in his preface to the translation of Ovid's Metamorphoses: 'it is in the reader's power to make it as short as he pleases.'

Believe me to be with very sincere regard,

Your much obliged

and affectionate servant,

CHAS. BURNEY.

From the Rev. Thomas Robinson to Mrs. H. More.

Leicester, 1799.

DEAR MADAM,

I am glad of the opportunity of addressing a few lines to you by the young lady who delivers you this—on two accounts; that I may commend her to your kind attentions, and acknowledge my own obligations to you. As she is one of my charge, in whom I have seen much to encourage a pleasing expectation of solid and consistent piety, I feel solicitous that during her stay in the contagious atmosphere of Bath, her principles may be preserved and established by some occasional interviews with you, for which I am confident she will be truly grateful.

I am ashamed that I have not yet offered you my best thanks for your 'Strictures on Female Education.' I was unwilling to obtrude myself

Digitized by Google

upon you by the formality of a post letter, and was disappointed in the expectation of writing to you by a common friend. Permit me now, though late, to say that I was gratified by your remembrance of my name among those who were favoured with your publication; and that I am only one out of many who are obliged by your labours, so admirably calculated to check the progress of vanity and irreligion, and diffuse the principles of Evangelical truth in those circles, where the preachers of the gospel can scarcely expect to be heard. *We* especially, who are parents, *concerned* for our daughters, that "they may be as corner-stones polished after the similitude of a palace," are much indebted to you for your charitable aid. Our gracious Lord has honoured you with remarkable acceptance, and I know you will humbly render to him the glory of whatever good may be effected. I can have no doubt but that he who has given you favour with the public, designs to accomplish his own purposes of mercy by your services; and amidst all the gloom of the present dark and cloudy day, it is consoling to observe that books of such a tendency are read by thousands with avidity and delight.

May your life be preserved and your health invigorated, for still further usefulness in the church of God! I commend you to his care, and pray that you may enjoy much of his presence and blessing.

I am, dear Madam, with sincere regard,

Your faithful friend and servant,

THOMAS ROBINSON.

Digitized by Google

From the Rev. R. Cecil to Mrs. H. More.

Great James Street, March 26, 1799.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I thank you very kindly for the excellent work I have just received; and though I cannot with propriety speak of it now, as I know I shall when I have gone through it, yet, from a glance, I have no doubt but it will prove of immense use to the rising generation.

When I have read it twice over, and have the pleasure of meeting you again, I will tell you all I think, especially if I should be so wise in my own eyes as to think I have found a fault; at present I will only say, thank you, and thank you again.

The great pain with which I move, and the great anxiety I had to secure every day prevented me from coming over to see you at Cowslip Green. I knew you would impute my not making the attempt to the true reason: none can make allowance for invalids like an invalid, which, I am sorry to learn from different quarters, you have been, in a considerable degree, for some time. I hope, however, you have not mentioned it in your book, lest fools should mistake your just views for sickly ones.

I knew you would wish to hear of my health; of which I can only say, that I am better, though with my complaint still upon me. Three months ago I had no expectation of being long here, but

Digitized by Google

last Sunday I made an attempt to read a sermon in public: whether I shall be able to go forward He alone knows, whose I am, and whom I serve. My dispensation is a dark, but I hope (from what has past through my mind) not an unprofitable one. With my kindest respects to your whole family,

I remain, dear Madam,

Your grateful humble servant,

R. CECIL.

From the Rev. J. Newton to Mrs. H. More.

April 7, 1799.

MY VERY DEAR MADAM,

Should I receive a book from some authors, I might perhaps make my acknowledgments immediately, before I had read it, that I might avoid the necessity of intimating my opinion of the performance; but I deferred thanking you for your obliging present, till I could say *I had read it;* and this I could not say sooner, for my engagements allow me but very little time for reading. I mean not, however, to tell you in detail, what I think of it. Let it suffice that I thank you for it. I thank the Lord for disposing and enabling you to write it—and my heart prays that it may be much read, and that the blessing of the Lord may accompany the perusal, and make it extensively useful; answerable to your benevolent design, and far beyond your expectation. I know you too well to apologise for my freedom when I say, that I wished the note vol. I. page 171, had been omitted. I hoped your just

Digitized by Google

censure of novels would have extended to the proscription of the whole race, without mercy and without exception. Self here will prompt every scribbler to interpret your note in his or her own favour, and to think the author could not mean to condemn him. My novel, he will say, contains accurate histories, striking delineations, &c. From the little I can recollect of what I have read in this line (perhaps forty years ago) I am almost ready to say that the *best are the worst;* for had not some been well-written and admired, it is probable we should not have been pestered with the contemptible small fry that followed. I am not sure that I ever read a lady novelist of note; but I thought Fielding and Richardson did much harm by forming the prevailing taste for novels. The latter is upon the whole the more serious, but he could not give a better idea of religion than he had. I suppose a novel cannot well succeed without contrasted characters, and I am afraid that of *Lovelace* has been more admired than *Clarissa's;* and the last words of Lovelace, when he threw up a handful of his blood towards heaven, saying,—*Let this expiate,*—are a full proof to me that Richardson was no more competent to teach divinity than Fielding. I have heard likewise that Mr. Richardson, when asked if he knew an original answerable to his portrait of Sir Charles Grandison, said, he might apply it to Lord Dartmouth, if *he was not a methodist.* But, in my opinion, the very best of these performances, being addressed merely to the imagination, have a tendency to fill the heads of young people with wind-

Digitized by Google

mills, and indispose them for taking their proper part in the more tame and familiar incidents of common life. I remind myself, and perhaps remind you, of the pedagogue who declaimed on the art of war in the presence of Hannibal—it is a sign I know to whom I am writing, to one who can bear, forbear, and forgive.

I have lately published Memoirs of Mr. Grimshaw; a copy would have waited upon you as a pepper-corn acknowledgment of my regard and affection and gratitude, had I well known how to send such a petty affair, before I received your present. If it has the same effect upon my brethren in the ministry while they read it, that it had upon me while writing it, it will humble and abase them. Such were my feelings for the time: but how often since have the worms of pride and self-conceit lifted up their saucy heads! Ah! why are dust and ashes proud! This seems the strongest feature and proof of our depravity. If you should come into St. Mary's, and hear me using many arguments to dissuade my hearers from thinking themselves ten or twelve feet high, and requesting them to be measured by a rule in my hand, would you not suppose either that I was mad myself, or thought that I was preaching to a company of lunatics?—yet this is a part of my employment, and, what is worse, my good advice is often thrown away even upon myself.

We go on much in our old way at No. 6; only that I have buried a servant who lived with me sixteen years in London, and a long while at Olney;

Digitized by Google

and in her I have lost a faithful friend—but she, I trust, has gained. My dear Miss Catlett is pretty well. I believe no family is more favoured with domestic peace and comfort than our's: the gracious Lord has made my widowed state (which I still feel) as pleasant in temporals as the nature of the case will admit, so that I can think of no addition worth wishing for, if a wish could procure it. My own health is remarkably good: though I feel some effects of advancing years, I seldom feel them in the pulpit; but I am within four months of seventy-four, and therefore live in daily expectation of some change; when, or how, or in what respects, is not my concern. I have committed myself and my all to the Lord. Pray for me, my dear Madam, that I may be able to abide by the surrender I have made, and may not presume either to direct or distrust him.

This is an eventful day! which calls for watchfulness and prayer, for weanedness from the world, and for power from on high, that we may stand fast in the Lord when all things are shaking around us! O what a mercy to see all power in heaven and earth exercised by Him who was nailed to the cross for sinners? May we be found among the few who are standing in the breach, pleading for mercy! The Lord bless you all, prays

Your affectionate and obliged,

JOHN NEWTON.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. Barbauld to Mrs. H. More.

Hampstead, 1799.

DEAR MADAM,

You have done me both honour and pleasure in the gratification you have indulged me with, of receiving, from the respected hand of the author, a treatise which every one who *reads*, will *peruse*. I dare not speak to *you*, who write with so much higher views than those of fame, of the brilliancy of the style, or the merit of the work considered as a literary composition. You will be better pleased if, passing over these excellences which, though every person of taste must feel them, every person solicitous for the interests of virtue and religion must consider as subordinate ones, I express my ardent wishes that your benevolent intentions towards the rising generation, and your unwearied exertions in every path where good is to be done to your fellow-creatures, may meet with ample success. The field is large, and labourers of every complexion, and who handle their tools very differently, are all called upon to co-operate in the great work. May all who have the good of mankind in view, preserve for each other the esteem and affectionate wishes which virtue owes to virtue, through all those smaller[1] differences which must ever take place between thinking beings seeing through different mediums, and subjected to the weakness and imperfection of

[1] The differences, however, were by no means small, between Mrs. More's and Mrs. Barbauld's religious opinions.

Digitized by Google

all human reasoning. Mr. Barbauld and myself recollect, with infinite pleasure, the delightful and interesting day we passed under your roof the summer before last. It was only damped by your indisposition: and the accounts I have heard of your health have not been such as to favour the hope that you have been much freer from it of late. *Spare yourself,* I entreat you, for the world cannot *spare you;* and consider that, in the most indolent day you can possibly spend, you are in every drawing-room, and every closet, and every parlour-window, gliding from place to place with wonderful celerity, and uttering good things to hundreds and hundreds of auditors. I do not know where you are at this moment, but, if at home, I beg you will give Mr. Barbauld's and my affectionate respects to all and every one of your sisters, and accept, my dear Madam, the assurance of the high esteem, with which,

I am,

Your obliged and affectionate,

A. L. BARBAULD.

From Mrs. Kennicott to Mrs. H. More.

Richmond, April 19, 1799.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am grieved at the return of your illness, for the suffering it will cause to you, and for your disappointment, and that of numbers who are impatiently expecting to see you, to tell you how greatly you have delighted them; for even those who think

Digitized by Google

you go too far in strictness are charmed with your wit. I really did not think it possible that I could have heard so much said upon the subject of your book, and yet have so few criticisms to have told you of. When I come to tell my tale, it must be altogether eulogium. I calculate that 50,000 persons have read this *little work*, as you call it, for I think one with another, each copy has had ten readers or hearers. Now, if we suppose only half of that number have been led by it to a reformation in one error, or strengthened in one virtue, what a beginning of good that will be; but I have no doubt, that some hundreds are now forming themselves upon a plan derived from this book. I like your additions. My book-binder is beating you, and paring you to the quick, that you may be a more convenient constant companion to me. A good and sensible woman, who is leading a very solitary life in the country, on being asked what she could do to divert herself, says she, 'I have my spinning-wheel and Hannah More; when I have spun off one pound of flax, I put on another, and when I have finished my book, I begin it again, and I want no other amusement.'

I do not apprehend there will be any check to the eagerness people have to be possessed of your book, from the delay of the publication of the second edition. I think the difficulty seems to whet the desire. I heard a lady, from whom I rather expected objection than commendation, say yesterday, 'I never read a book in which there were so many truths.' Some persons were objecting to the high

Digitized by Google

price of the work. I begged them to advert to what had been said a little before, namely, that chickens were ten shillings a couple, and surely they would allow that the two volumes were a more valuable purchase than two chickens. I think the highest of your triumphs that has come to my knowledge, has been over a man, who, I believe, holds our understandings in contempt and our writings in abhorrence: he first read your work, and then recommended it.

I saw Princess Elizabeth when I passed through Windsor. She read to me a letter from Princess Royal, in which she speaks in high terms of your book—says she has the satisfaction of agreeing with you in most points, and hopes to make much use of it in the education of her daughters, that is to say, the Duke's.

Princess Mary read your book twice, and then said she should buy it for herself, and be frequently consulting it.

And now I think you may say, that I have gone as contrary to your commands as Balaam did to those of Balak; for you called me to criticise and censure your work, and behold I have altogether commended it.

Tell me what you are about, and in what forwardness your collected edition of all your works is. A friend of mine, and one of your great admirers, is afraid of your being too humble in your apology for having been an encourager of theatrical amusements; not from any partiality which she herself has for the stage, but lest some people

Digitized by Google

may make a wrong use of what you in your humility may say of your past errors, and pretend that you were as dissipated as they when you were young, and that it is but of late years that you have taken up *such unwarrantable strictness*. I promised my friend to tell you her apprehensions, and so I have.

Love to the sisterhood. How I long to talk with you.

Your's most affectionately,

A. KENNICOTT.

From Mrs. Montagu to Mrs. H. More.

Sandleford, May, 1799.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I am so pleased with every sentiment, so sensible of the truth of all your precepts, so charmed with the manner in which they are delivered, that I am almost afraid of entering into the subject, lest my remarks should tire your patience, and my admiration offend your delicacy. I will restrain myself, therefore, to what you will hear with most pleasure, the good which I think this charming work will do to our sex. You have most judiciously pointed out the errors of modern education, which seems calculated entirely to qualify young women for whatever their godfathers and godmothers had renounced for them at their baptism; and what is most shocking, is, that a virtuous matron, and tender mother, values herself much on not having omitted anything that can fit her daughter for the world,

Digitized by Google

the flesh, and the devil. Brilliant talents, graces of person, and a confirmed intrepidity and continual habit of displaying these advantages, is all that is aimed at in the education of girls: the virtues that make domestic life happy, the sober and useful qualities that make a moderate fortune and a retired situation comfortable, are never inculcated. Nothing can be more justly conceived, or more happily expressed, than your observation 'that one should be led to imagine, by the common modes of female education, that life consisted of one universal holiday, and that the only contest was, who should be best enabled to excel in the sports and games that were to be celebrated in it.' The parent's first error in the preference of accomplishments to virtues, leads naturally their miseducated girls to prefer sentiment to principle, and to make it the guide of life. I was charmed with your making Belial the demon of sentiment, and Abdiel the angel of principle: and so sure am I, that principles only will preserve a woman in the constant observance of the laws of God, and the duties of her situation, that I will venture to assure the young ladies that the most sentimental of their admirers would prefer (for a wife) the most simple and unadorned of the daughters of faithful Abdiel, to the most highly-finished, and accomplished, and graceful daughters of the demon of sentiment. I could dwell with pleasure on every sentence of your whole work, but I remember I am writing to the person in the world who will least sympathize in my enthusiasm. I may, however, say, I have a most confident hope it will be of great

Digitized by Google

service. If our women lose their domestic virtues, all *the charities* will be dissolved, *for which our country is a name so dear;* the men will be profligate, the public will be betrayed, and whatever has blessed or distinguished the English nation above our neighbours on the Continent will disappear; and in a little time, national and natural gloominess will take place of the thoughtless gaiety that reigns at present. The tenor of your whole work tends to inspire a preference of those things which give solid and lasting happiness, to such as bestow only splendid honours, and flattering distinctions. I hope, therefore, you will do me the justice to believe, that your society and your friendship will ever be esteemed a most precious favour. I see you date from Bristol, the 20th of this month. I am now in Berkshire, but I hope the winter will assemble us all in London, and I must beg you will then give me every opportunity of assuring you of the great esteem and regard with which I am,

Dear Madam, your most obliged,
And faithful humble servant,
ELIZ. MONTAGU.

From the Countess Cremorne to Mrs. H. More.

Stanhope Street, 1799.

I almost scruple intruding upon you, my dear Mrs. More, knowing as I do with sorrow, that you are so very far from well; and also knowing how many letters are pouring in upon you from all your friends and correspondents; but I cannot help

Digitized by Google

wishing to tell you, how gratefully I feel your kindness in sending me your most valuable book: I wish I could give you the satisfaction of knowing with what sort of pleasure I have been reading it. I wish you could have seen me reading it, as I do the letters of a few beloved friends,—slowly, for fear of coming to the end; and reading those parts over and over again, which most delight, and I hope, mend my heart. You know, my dear Madam, that I do not deal in compliments: in sincerity and truth let me assure you, that I do not think I ever read a book which interested me quite so much. It will, I hope and trust, do extensive good, in these most perilous times. I hear our dear Bishop of London mentioned it in his sermon last Sunday, at St. James's Church, in a manner the most honourable (if I may be allowed the expression) to himself, as well as to you. Will you allow me to tell you, that I could not read the eighty-sixth page of the first volume with dry eyes; but my tears were tears of joy and gratitude: I felt that I had not (to make use of your own beautiful words) 'blotted out the spring from the year,' by robbing my dear little girl (when she was lent to me) of the 'simple joys, and the unbought delights which naturally belonged to her blooming season;' her pleasures were, gathering for me, or for her father, the first cowslip; watching the bees at work; or, full of raptures, bounding before us at the first singing of the cuckoo, or the nightingale; she never was at a *play*, or *opera*, or *baby ball*, and I believe there never was a happier child. Our son, too, was

Digitized by Google

brought up in the same simplicity. But I am interrupted by a kind visit from Mr. Gisborne, and I am ashamed to see how I have been writing about my children; but I will not make an apology, I am sure your kind heart will make it for me. I shall rejoice sincerely in hearing that your health is restored, and in seeing you, before it be very long, at Fulham and at Chelsea. I trust you are very thankful to God, for being enabled to be such a bright light in this dark bewildering world. May He give you every real comfort here, and crown you with everlasting blessedness hereafter. Pray believe me, my dear Mrs. More, to be

Your affectionate and grateful

F. CREMORNE.

From Mr. Pepys to Mrs. H. More.

Wimpole Street, 1799.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

It has usually been my practice to thank any author who has done me the favour of sending me his book, before I could be supposed to have read it, that I might not be under the necessity of saying any thing of its contents; but I knew that there would be no necessity for such prudential caution with respect to the charming work of your's which I have been reading, for which you are entitled, not to my thanks only, but to those of all mankind. I hope the elevated motives which induced you to compose it, and that high reward for which you are (I cannot doubt) a successful candidate, must make

Digitized by Google

human praise despicable; but I cannot refuse myself the pleasure of assuring you, that not only in my estimation, but in that of every one whose judgment is most valuable, both in point of sentiment and language, this work has placed you in the foremost rank of English writers.

The profusion and brilliancy of imagination, with such wonderful consistency of metaphor, cannot fail of captivating even those who would perhaps have but little relish for the same exalted truths detailed in a dry syllogistical manner; and I really flatter myself, that though few, and perhaps none, will have humility enough to acknowledge fairly their obligations, yet that many will feel the good effects of such a book upon their practice and habits.

With respect to conversation, I cannot help telling you the observation which my eldest son made, viz. That it was a pity so much fine writing should have been bestowed upon that which no longer exists; for that the very *subject matter* of your regulations, and the *thing itself* which you are so anxious to improve, is, alas, no longer to be found! However, as it is well known that such a thing as conversation *has* existed, there is no physical impossibility but that it may again revive, and if it ever should, I am persuaded it is never likely to receive its ultimate improvement so soon, as from those regulations. After what I have said (and very honestly too) upon the work itself, I must beg leave to put in a word of commendation for its readers, under which description I must include all my acquaintance, as well as myself. Now I do

Digitized by Google

think, that to feel greatly humbled in one's own esteem, to be much mortified at such a glowing representation of what one ought to be, in comparison with what one is, and not only to take all this wholesome castigation patiently, but to break out in praise and admiration of the kind friend who inflicts it, is a symptom of some remaining sparks of goodness, which (I insist upon it) it is your duty to fan and encourage, from time to time, by further writings of the same kind and excellence.

I have heard but of one lady who is determined not to read your book, and the reason which she gives, is, that as she has *settled* her habits, she does not want to be *reasoned out* of what she cannot alter; which puts me in mind of a stupid judge, who had hastily laid down the law before he had heard a word from the counsel; and, as he found, while one of them was pleading against it with great force of argument, that his opinion was gradually slipping away from him, cried out, 'Mr. ——, I will not be argued out of my opinion in this manner.' That you may not, however, be inconsolable, I can tell you of another, who says that she will read over your book *twice* this year, and *once* every other year as long as she lives. As you must be quite exhausted by writing letters upon this occasion, and are still, as I hear from our excellent friend Mr. Bowdler, tormented, at times, by your old headache, let me intreat you not to put yourself to any inconvenience with respect to me; but give me sometimes a place in your remembrance, when you offer up your prayers to heaven; which, if those of

Digitized by Google

any mortal can be so for a fellow creature, must be surely efficacious.

Your's affectionately,

W. W. PEPYS.

From the Rev. James Bean to Mrs. H. More.

Carshalton, May, 1799.

DEAR MADAM,

My thanks for a copy of your excellent work would have been sent immediately on the receipt of it, had I not been firmly persuaded that the perusal of it would give me the greatest pleasure. I have gone through it, and I trust that I can say, I have been greatly edified as well as pleased by your 'Strictures.'

I most earnestly pray that the blessing of God may attend your pious labours for the good of mankind. Your book is a loud call to the world; and I cannot but hope, that he who disposed you to write on this subject, and assisted you so much in the performance, will make it successful. I consider it as a token of his mercy to my country, that the cause and cure of some of its most deplorable and most threatening evils, have been so ably pointed out by your engaging pen.

Suffer me, dear Madam, before I conclude, to express my regret, that your health has not allowed you to continue those useful little publications, the Cheap Repository Tracts. They were great auxiliaries to us who are in the ministry; and we are therefore very sorry to find, that we are not likely

Digitized by Google

to receive any further assistance from this quarter. But the loss is not ours only; the cause in which we are engaged was served, by means of those tracts, in places we cannot approach.

May the Lord be graciously pleased to restore your health, and continue you yet among us to do us good, and glorify his holy name. This is the sincere prayer of,

Dear Madam,
Your obliged and respectful servant,
JAMES BEAN.

From the Bishop of Durham, (Dr. Barrington,) to Mrs. H. More.

Cavendish Square, 1799.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Two causes have co-operated to delay my writing to you; a notion which I entertained that you would before this time have been in London, and an uncommon pressure of business. I have recently discovered my mistake as to the first; though the second still continues very little diminished. Allow me, in general terms, to assure you that I have read your recent publication with a pleasure and a satisfaction of which I cannot convey to you an adequate idea. While it reflects the highest credit on your understanding, your talents, and your heart, it will gradually, but eventually be productive of the best consequences; and though the work is professedly written for the improvement of your own sex, if duly attended to,

Digitized by Google

it must in parts of it be of essential service to mine. Mrs. Barrington's best and kindest wishes accompany mine.

Believe me, my dear Madam,
With the truest regard,
Your faithful servant,
S. DUNELM.

From the Bishop of Lincoln, (Dr. Tomline) to Mrs. H. More.

Downing Street, July 5, 1799.

MADAM,

I was so exceedingly occupied when I received your 'Strictures on the Modern System of Female Education,' that it was really impossible for me to read them. I delayed acknowledging your obliging kindness in sending them to me, till I had the mortification of hearing that you were so unwell that a common letter might be troublesome to you. I then determined to wait till I had read them, and now, Madam, I beg leave to assure you that the perusal of them has afforded me the highest satisfaction. There is much to admire upon various grounds, and what is better, there is a great deal which must do good. The books are in every body's hands, and it is impossible for mothers to read them without advantage to themselves and their daughters. I have no daughters to be benefited, but I am confident that my sons will have better wives. No age ever owed more to a female pen than to yours. All your exertions tend to the same point—

Digitized by Google

the cause of virtue and religion; and, whether you write for a Duchess or Will Chip, you are sure of doing good.

I have ventured to send you, through Mr. Henry Thornton, an elementary work which I have just published. Did you know the extreme ignorance of many candidates for orders, you would not, I think, disapprove of its design.

I sincerely hope that the sea air may be of service to you, and restore you to perfect health. I left Mrs. Pretyman at Buckden, having come to town for the purpose of attending the House of Lords upon the Slave Trade Bills—we succeeded in one, but last night we were beaten upon the Sierra Leone Bill.

I have passed almost the whole of the week at Fulham Palace. The Bishop and Mrs. Porteus are perfectly well.

Believe me with great regard and esteem,
Madam,
Your most obedient servant,
G. LINCOLN.

From Bishop Porteus to Mrs. H. More.

London, Sept. 1799.

No, I am determined never to say a civil thing to a lady again as long as I live. Here have I, by my wonderful politeness to you, drawn myself, and what is worse, you too, into such a scrape! And yet I am not sure whether you are not the beginner of all this mischief. What business had you to

Digitized by Google

abuse the poets so unmercifully, as to assert that they are always ready to lend a hand to any mischief that is going forwards? This has drawn down upon you the vengeance of Peter Pindar, and because I have unfortunately given you a tolerable character, he has wreaked his ire also upon me. He has made us both, in short, the burthen of his song, in a half-crown pamphlet, and as my crime is too much complaisance, your's is too great asperity. When I first saw the advertisement, I confess I was a little startled. I expected some neat ridicule and attic pleasantry, that might have created a smile or even a laugh, which I should not have greatly relished; but when I had read the pamphlet, all my apprehensions vanished. Instead of playful wit and humour, it is nothing but gross and coarse ribaldry, rancour, and profaneness. It seems to me impossible for it to extort a smile from the most risible countenance, or to excite in any mind not equally profligate with the author's, any other emotions than those of indignation and disgust. You may therefore be at perfect ease on this subject, and may safely leave this heavy mass of stupidity, dulness, and malignity, to sink under its own weight. We poor mortals cannot possibly repine at being treated as the King himself has been treated before us. We are just returned from paying a visit to our friends as Teston and Hunton. We found Sir Charles in perfect health, and his usual calm spirits, with his house full of company. He is much amused with a water-mill and a wind-mill, which he has lately built, for making oil cakes for cattle. He will,

Digitized by Google

in a short time, make a prodigious addition to his fortune.

When do you suppose our female missionary will embark? Whenever she wants her money, it will be ready for her.

I am at present in London for a few days on private business. We shall probably stay about a fortnight longer at Sundridge, and then remove to our quarters at Fulham. I have no news as yet to send you, and I am afraid there is none that will give you much comfort. The unfortunate events in Holland and Switzerland, have, I fear, removed the prospect of peace to an immense distance. Had every thing gone on prosperously, it must have taken place very soon.

I am anxious to hear a better account of your own and your sister's health. Let me have a single line from you for that purpose, and be assured that,

I am,

Your very sincere and affectionate friend and servant,

B. LONDON.

From the Rev. J. Newton to Mrs. H. More.

Portswood Green, Southampton, Sept. 1799.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I wrote a few lines when you were at Clapham, to tell you that I sympathized with you in your illness, and prayed for your recovery. Many prayers were doubtless offered for you, and the

Digitized by Google

Lord heard and answered them. But before I knew whether you were so far recovered as to bear a visit from me, I heard that you had removed to Fulham. Thus I missed the pleasure of seeing you, and shall probably see you no more in this world. For though, I thank the Lord, my health and spirits are still good, I entered my seventy-fifth year almost a month ago; and I feel that the shadows of the evening are coming over me. However, I would be thankful that I ever saw you; and especially that I had the privilege of seeing you at Cowslip Green: I number that among the happiest days of my life. The recollection of it will be pleasant, while I retain my memory; and ere long I hope we shall meet before the throne and join in unceasing songs of praise to Him who loved us. There our joys will be unclouded, without interruption, abatement, or end! *O præclarum diem!*

If old age gives me a prospect of death, sickness, like a telescope, often presents a clearer view; whilst it is, as I hope, with you, as yet at a distance. Perhaps when you were ill, you could perceive the objects within the veil, beyond this visible diurnal sphere, more distinctly than at other times. I have known but little of sickness of late years. I attempt to look through the telescope of faith, which gives reality and substance to things not seen, but the glasses are cloudy, and my hands shake, so that I can obtain but very imperfect and transient glances; but a glance into the heavenly state is worth all that can be seen here below in the course of a long life. If the Lord be with us (and he has promised

Digitized by Google

that he will) in the approaching transition, we may go forward without fear. Guilt and ignorance have personified death; they represent him with frowns on his brow, and darts in his hand. But what is death to a believer in Jesus? It is simply a ceasing to breathe. If we personify it, we may welcome it as a messenger sent to tell us that the days of our mourning are ended, and to open to us the gate into everlasting life. The harbingers of death, sickness, pain, and conflict,—are frequently formidable to the flesh,—but death itself is nothing else than a deliverance from them all.

The apostle calls the body a tabernacle or tent. When a tent is taking down, the removal of the boards or curtains will let in light, quite new and different from what was seen before. Mr. Waller has borrowed this thought;—

> 'The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed,
> Lets in new light through chinks that time has made.'

We are surrounded with a great cloud of witnesses, and though we cannot see them, I believe they see us. Before the moment of death, great discoveries are often made, and both the pious and the profane have strong intimations whither they are going, and with what company they will soon mingle. I have seen many instances of this; my dear Eliza was a remarkable one. Her animated language and joyful expectations could not be the result of long experience, for she was a child, and I believe her knowledge of the Lord and his salvation was not a year old: but while the tent was

Digitized by Google

taking down, she appeared to see invisibles, and to hear unutterables. She certainly had ideas which she could find no words to express. How wonderful will the moment after death be! how we shall see without eyes, hear without ears, and praise without a tongue, we cannot at present conceive. We now use the word *intuition*—then we shall know the meaning of it. But we are assured that they who love and trust the Saviour shall see him as he is, and be like him and with him. And he has promised us dying strength for the dying hour. Let this suffice—faithful is he that has promised, who also will do it.

We left London on the 9th of July—were out one week at Reading, and have been here since the 19th. We hope to be at home in about ten days. Our retreat has been very pleasant with friends, whom we dearly love, and I am an enthusiast for the country. I have not, indeed, dear Mr. Cowper's discriminating eye to contemplate the miniature beauties, but I am much affected with the *tout ensemble*. Here we have hills and dales, woods, lawns, and rivers; the music of the winds whistling in the trees, and the birds singing in the bushes. All is delightful. My post at St. Mary's, in the midst of noise and smoke, is very different; but still, it is my post, and I would not change it for any spot in the habitable globe.

My dear Miss Catlett joins me in respects, love, and thanks to you, to Miss Patty and all your sisters. She likewise has a thankful remembrance of Cowslip Green.

Digitized by Google

I pray the Lord to afford you a comfortable measure of health to crown all your labours of love in his service with increasing success, and to bless you in your soul with abounding grace and peace.

I am, my dear Madam,
Your very affectionate and much obliged,
JOHN NEWTON.

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

Cowslip Green, Sept. 11, 1799.

MY DEAR SIR,

I had intended to delay the history of the Wedmore prosecution, until I saw how it would end; but your kind sympathy in our trials and difficulties leads me to trouble you with it as far as we have gone. Our hostile farmers do not present us under the Conventicle Act, of which probably they know nothing; but on some old, and I believe obsolete statute, which requires every school-master to take out a licence. I dined by invitation with my diocesan, as I passed through Wells in my way home. His reception of me was highly cordial, and even affectionate; but he told me Wedmore was not under his jurisdiction, being a peculiar under the dean, in whose court we had been presented. Dr. Moss, however, (the Bishop's son,) at my request, had picked up the charges that had been exhibited against us. Among these were, that my schoolmaster had called the bishops, dumb dogs; that he had said all who went to church, and did not come to hear him, would go to hell; and that he distri

Digitized by Google

buted books called 'A Guide to Methodism.' Could you believe that such impossible stuff could be seriously carried to a bishop, through the channel of some of his own chapter? One or two of these canons, (poor creatures!) say that I carry every thing before me, having *bitten* all the country clergymen, and secured the ear of the bishop. But the mischief lies deeper. A clergyman in my own neighbourhood, where we have a flourishing school, has turned Socinian, and is now enraged at the doctrines *we* teach. He is doing all possible injury to us and our schemes. This cause too, *has a cause*—and this man's malice is inflamed by the Anti-Jacobin Magazine, which is spreading more mischief over the land than almost any other book, because it is doing it under the mask of loyalty. It is representing all serious men as hostile to government; and our enemies here whisper that we are abetted by you, and such as you, to hurt the establishment. This is only an episode, for I must talk to you more at large, and see if no means can be employed to stop this spreading poison. I hear that the author is ——, who having been refused some favour by the Bishop of London, exercises his malignity towards him in common with those whom he calls Methodists.

But to return to Wedmore. There is a new Dean of ——. I had no avenue to this man, who, I found, had been greatly prejudiced against us by the following means. He is not rich—has a large family, and when he came down to take possession, passed his time at the house of his agent,

Digitized by Google

who happened to be the very attorney who was employed to appear against us at the visitation, when we were presented. Now this attorney breathes out threatenings and slaughters against my school; he being also the agent of the Wedmore farmers. I conceived the bold measure of telling my story to Mr. Windham, with whom my acquaintance was too slight to justify such a step; and knowing as I did, that the cause was prejudiced against me in his mind; that is, I knew that every Anti-Abolitionist in the world, was of necessity an enemy to religious instruction at home. His answer, however, was highly obliging; written, as it was, amidst all the bustle of public successes. You will be pleased with Windham's conduct in this business. What effect his mediation will produce, I have yet to learn.

Some farmers in a parish adjoining, where there is also a school, have been to the fortune-teller, to know if we are Methodists, and if our school is methodistical. The oracle returned an ambiguous answer, and desired to know what reason they had for suspecting it; the farmers replied, it was because we sung Watts's hymns. The sage returned for answer, this was no proof; had they no better reason? 'Yes,' they answered, 'for if the *hymns* were not methodistical, the *tunes* were.' The Pythian asked why they were so, the reply was, 'because they were not in Farmer Clap's book!' I thought this fact ridiculous enough to amuse you. Yet these people are our judges, and there are not wanting those, who, though better taught, will listen to the representation of such accusers. In the

Digitized by Google

midst of this clamour, poor Patty went down to the place two Sundays ago. The farmers called a vestry, (to which she could not get admittance,) to sign a paper to abolish the school. With great calmness she went on teaching the whole day. At night, about two hundred orderly people assembled as usual, but just as she was going to begin, two farmers came to the door, very tipsy, loudly vociferating that they would have no such methodistical doings, for that the sermon they had had in the morning was quite enough—their intoxication, however, did not give a very favourable evidence of its good effects. After they had spent their violence, Patty told them it would be a serious thing if they should die that night, after having attempted to disturb a people who were solely met for religious purposes. One of them said, 'How can you put such melancholy things in one's head, ma'am,' and ran out. She quietly went through her business to a most respectful audience, whose solemn attention rewarded her for what she had gone through. On Sunday, we are going, if I am able, again; whether the violence be found to be abated or inflamed, you shall know. I hope it may please God to endue us with a proper temper, and quiet perseverance, and that these trials may help to purify our motives. I am better myself—but we have much domestic sickness and sorrow. May all work together for good!

God bless you and yours.

Yours affectionately,

H. More.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. H. More to her Sister.

Fulham Palace, 1799.

I have been rather royal lately; on Monday I spent the morning at the Pavilion at Hampton Court, with the Duchess of Gloucester, and yesterday passed the morning with little Princess Charlotte at Carlton House. She is the most sensible and genteel little creature you would wish to see. I saw Carlton House and gardens, in company with the pretty Princess, who had great delight in opening the drawers, uncovering the furniture, curtains, lustres, &c. to show me; my visit was to Lady Elgin, who has been spending some days here.

For the Bishop of London's entertainment and mine, the Princess was made to exhibit all her learning and accomplishments; the first consisted in her repeating the 'Little Busy Bee,' the next in dancing very gracefully, and in singing 'God save the King,' which was really affecting, (all things considered) from her little voice. Her understanding is so forward that they really might begin to teach her many things. It is perhaps the highest praise, after all, to say, that she is exactly like the child of a private gentleman, wild and natural, but sensible, lively and civil. I am really anxious that you should be using the new chaise, and will immediately take measures for having it conveyed.

H. More.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. Martha More to one of her Sisters.

Grafton Street, 1800.

Lady Waldegrave was drinking tea here the other evening, when the butler came in and told us that there was a report that the King had been shot at in the play-house; the gentlemen flew for information, and found, alas! that it was too true. The pistol went off just before the Queen entered the box. The King quietly said 'Keep back, there has been one squib, perhaps there will be another;' he thought of this at the moment, as she is remarkably fearful of them. Sheridan met the Princesses, and apologized to them for not lighting them himself, but he was looking for a constable to take up a fellow; this he said to prepare them for some bustle, but they could not long be kept in ignorance. They were a long time recovering Princess Augusta. One of the Lords in waiting was near making an abrupt communication from fright and agitation, but the King kept him, and every body else, from being indiscreet: such self-controul is astonishing: every body is of opinion, that it was one of the grandest and most interesting scenes ever witnessed. The King was wonderfully great and collected through the whole; but when the house continued shouting for an unreasonable length of time, he appeared much affected, sat down and looked for a minute on the ground. When he got home, he said to the Queen, 'As it is all safe, I am not sorry it has happened, for I cannot regret any thing that has caused so much affection to be displayed.'

Digitized by Google

Lady Cremorne and Mrs. Carter yesterday told us, that the King's confidence exceeds all belief. Were you not delighted to see all the opposition at the levee? The bishop says that both that and the drawing-room were so full, that it was complete mobbing and trampling.

Nothing is more talked of than Robert Hall's Sermons. Our bishop makes every family of every description possessed of money, buy that and 'The Strictures;' and speaks of both as grand engines to reform the times; but of all the admirers of the latter, every one falls short of Mr. Cecil; his words to us were, yesterday, 'It is one of the most perfect works, of its kind, in all its parts, that any century or country has produced.' Adieu.

MARTHA MORE.

I forgot to mention that the Bishop of Durham and his lady breakfasted with us at Fulham Palace last Thursday. The Bishop was kind and condescending as usual, he talked over all the Blagdon business; bid us not be afraid; they could not injure our useful schemes. He is steady and warm in his approbation. He fully feels the importance of instructing the poor, as the grand means of saving the nation.

From Mrs. H. More to one of her Sisters.

Fulham Palace, 1800.

I find that the Chapters in the 'Strictures' on Human Corruption and Baby Balls, are the two

Digitized by Google

which give most offence. My time is so short (as I did not dare risk staying more than one night in town, finding my head-ache come on) that I had only time to call on the Montagus and a few others. It gave me great pleasure to hear what my venerable diocesan, the Bishop of Bath and Wells,[1] had been saying of me to Mrs. Boscawen: he expressed great satisfaction at my late legacy from Mrs. Bouverie, and then said, (adverting, I suppose, to some of our enemies in Somersetshire,) 'they come and tell me things sometimes, but I only answer them, 'It is Mrs. More: I never make any inquiries: I ask no questions when I know it is Mrs. More: I know she is doing right, and that it is all as it should be.' It showed great warmth in a man near ninety.

Dear Mrs. Boscawen was looking very poorly: when I was coming away from her the other morning, I said, 'God bless you, my dear Madam,' 'that is very well,' said she, holding me by the hand, and looking most steadfastly in my face, 'but you must do more; you must pray for me; I am going gently off.' In order that the next visit might be consistent with this, we went to Mrs. Carter, and found her at home, at eighty-three, just returned from the *city*. She was quite rejoiced to see us, and was agreeable and interesting.

[1] Dr. Moss.

Digitized by Google

From the Rev. John Newton to Mrs. H. More.

Coleman Street Buildings, May 24, 1800.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Glad should I be to have another peep at you, but all is uncertain; and if the precept, 'Boast not thyself of to-morrow,' is a proper admonition to all persons at all times, it certainly does not become me, at the age of seventy-five, to look so far forward as to the end of a whole month. Well! my times are in the Lord's hands, and should we not meet upon earth, I trust we shall meet before the throne, where neither sin nor sorrow shall be able to distress us. Here we are sometimes called to sow in tears, but the harvest will be a series of everlasting, unmixed, and uninterrupted joys. Oh, this blessed hope softens the trials of life, and gilds the gloomy valley of the shadow of death.

My most dear and intimate friend William Cowper, has obtained a release from all his distresses. I preached a funeral sermon for him on the 11th instant, from Eccles. ii. 2, 3. Why was he, who both by talents and disposition seemed qualified, if it were possible, to reform the age in which he lived, harassed by distresses and despair, so that the bush which Moses saw all in flames, was a fit emblem of his case!

The Lord's thoughts and ways are so much above our's, that it becomes us rather to lie in the dust in adoration and silence, than to inquire presumptuously into the grounds of his proceedings; yet I think we

Digitized by Google

may draw some lessons from his sufferings. I wish to learn from them thankfulness, for the health and peace with which I have been favoured;—caution, not to depend upon whatever gifts, abilities, or usefulness, past comforts or experiences have been afforded me. In all these respects my friend was, during a part of his life, greatly my superior. He lived, (though not without short conflicts) in point of comfort and conduct, far above the common standard, for about ten years; and for twenty-seven years afterwards he knew not one peaceful day. May it remind me likewise of the precarious tenure by which we hold all our desirables. A slight alteration in the nervous system, may make us a burden and a terror to ourselves and our friends. It may likewise reconcile us to lighter troubles, when we see what the Lord's most favoured and honoured servants are appointed to endure. But we are sure that he is rich enough, and that eternity is long enough, to make them abundant amends for whatever his infinite wisdom may see meet to call them to, for promoting his glory in the end. For this bush, though so long in the flames, was not consumed, because the Lord was there. The last twelve hours of his life he lay still, and took no notice; but so long as he could speak, there was no proof that his derangement was either removed or abated. He was, however, free from his great terrors. There was no sign either of joy or sorrow when near his departure. What a glorious surprise must it be to find himself released from all his chains in a moment, and in the presence of the Lord whom he loved, and whom he

Digitized by Google

served; for the Apostle says, When absent from the body, present with the Lord. There is no intermediate state. How little does he think now of all that he suffered while here!

This is a disinterested letter. It neither requires nor expects an answer from you. When I wrote last I was desirous of possessing one more token of your kindness. You have gratified me, and I ask no further. Probably this will likewise be my last to you. My health is remarkably good; but eyes, ears, and recollection fail. I aim to adopt the words of Dr. Watts, and sometimes I think I can. The breaches *cheerfully* foretell that the house will shortly fall; yet as I am still able to preach, and am still heard with acceptance, I have no reason to wish to be gone. Phil. i. 23, 24. Pray for me, my dear ladies, that I may work while it is called to-day, and that when the night cometh, I may retire like a thankful guest from a full table. My case is almost as singular as Jonah's. He was the only one delivered after having been entombed in the belly of a fish; and I, perhaps, the only one ever brought from bondage and misery in Africa, to preach "Jesus Christ and him crucified." In early life I knew much of the evil of the world, but I brought it all upon myself. During the last half century, I have been favoured with as much of the good which such a world as this can afford, as perhaps any person in it. I have had internal conflicts, abasements, bereavements, and sharp trials; but I think upon the whole, I have been as happy in temporals, as the present state of

Digitized by Google

mortality will admit. Even now I can think of nothing with a serious wish, beyond what I have, if a wish could procure it. But all the past is like the remembrance of a dream, gone beyond recall; the present is precarious, and will soon be past likewise. But oh! the future! Blessed be He who hath brought immortality to light by the gospel. I need not say to myself, or my dear friends who are in the Lord, *Quo nunc abibis in loco?* we know where they are and how employed. There I humbly trust my dear Mary is waiting for me, and in the Lord's own time I hope to join with her, and all the redeemed, in praising the Lamb, once upon the cross, now upon the throne of glory.

How apt is self to occupy too much of my paper, when I am writing to those whom I love; excuse a fault that flows from a sincere regard which cannot be confined by forms. I love you, I love Miss Patty, I love you all. If I were a poet, I should think more frequently of the five sisters and Cowslip Green, than of the nine muses and Parnassus. The Lord bless you all separately and jointly, with all the blessings pertaining to life and godliness.

I am, my dear Madam,

Your very affectionate and much obliged,

JOHN NEWTON.

Digitized by Google

From her Royal Highness the late Duchess of Gloucester to Mrs. H. More.

Gloucester House, June 3, 1800.

MY DEAR MRS. MORE,

I hope you did not suffer from my visit last Saturday. I do not write this merely as an inquiry after you, but as a recommendation against myself; for I do not think you are sufficiently re-established to make a morning visit; therefore I would rather give up my own gratification, than have you run any risk by calling upon me. You are, I hope, sensible that I am making a great sacrifice in this request. Indeed, my dear Madam, to deprive myself of one of the very short conversations I am so happy as to have with you, is the highest I can make you; but your health is of such very great consequence to the world, that it is not to be endangered by any matter of ceremony.

Adieu, my dear Mrs. More,

I remain

Your very affectionate friend,

and devoted admirer,

MARIA.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER XI.

THE schools continued to be very full, and very prosperous. It had been the great object of Mrs. H. More and her sister Martha, to lead the children to a spiritual apprehension of Scripture truths, and the practical application of them to their hearts and their conduct, and they had often witnessed the success of their labours in the production of many pious and moral characters, which grew out of these institutions, from among whom they were able to select persons well qualified for becoming masters and mistresses of their various establishments. Many of the scholars carried the principles they had there imbibed, into their daily practice, and became sober and industrious heads of families. An edifying volume might be composed of anecdotes, displaying the beneficial results of these institutions; but this is not the place for such a record.

Among the expedients for improving the habits and characters of the poor, the institution of female friendly societies had been an object of Mrs. Hannah More's solicitude since the second year of their

Digitized by Google

residence in this neighbourhood. Innumerable were the difficulties they had to contend with in their endeavours to make these ignorant people comprehend the nature and usefulness of such establishments; which were, at that time, as rare as schools for the poor. Many were the meetings, and contests, and reasonings which they were obliged patiently to sustain and encounter, before mistake and prejudice could be softened into acquiescence. By perseverance, however, and every fair art of persuasion, this object was also obtained, and these societies, wisely framed and regulated, became the source of much contentment, comfort, and improvement to these remote villages; particularly to one which was miserably destitute of any other kind of aid.

After these beneficial plans had been carried on for several years, the curate of Blagdon, the parish in which Cowslip Green was situated, waited on the sisters, to request they would open one of their schools in his parish. This they absolutely declined; declaring that neither their health (which had already greatly suffered by their exertions) nor their time, nor their finances would allow them to extend their personal superintendence beyond the range it had already taken. The application was however renewed by a deputation from the churchwardens and overseers of the parish, sent by this clergyman, who came with an earnest request that 'they would be pleased to come and do *their* parish a little good.' They acknowledged that it was the great reformation wrought in some neighbouring parishes which 'made them bold to come,' as the notorious profli-

Digitized by Google

gacy of the place was exceedingly deplored by the better part of the inhabitants.

The sisters at length yielded, and removing thither an approved master from one of their other schools, they soon collected near two hundred children, whom they found deplorably ignorant. Things, however, soon put on a new face, and a rapid improvement rewarded their efforts. The beneficial effects which had resulted from the establishment of Sunday readings in the other villages, induced them to make the experiment in the parish of Blagdon. The poor adults as well as children, resorted to them in crowds, and the minister and his wife generally attended. In the course of two or three years from this auspicious beginning, it appeared, from a letter received by Mrs. More from the wife of the clergyman of Blagdon,[1] that 'the two sessions and the two assizes were past, and a third was approaching, and neither as prosecutor nor prisoner, plaintiff nor defendant, had any of that parish, (once so notorious for crimes and litigations) appeared. Warrants for wood-stealing and other pilferings were becoming quite out of fashion.'

We find the following singular and interesting little incident recorded in the journal of Mrs. Martha: 'On our return to the country, we found Blagdon in a steady uniform course of improvement, in morals, and in religious knowledge. The evening reading was very affecting; the whole people stood up; and with the modesty and simplicity of chil-

[1] Mrs. Bere.

Digitized by Google

dren, suffered the schoolmaster to state to us the particulars of their behaviour during our absence. It was an extraordinary proceeding, for the parish officers were among their number. It was at the desire also of the justice himself, (the curate of Blagdon, before-mentioned) that we were publicly informed of the very decorous behaviour of the men on the day of their club-meeting.'

After the above account the reader will be surprized to learn that it was in this very quarter that a violent persecution arose against Mrs. More, principally promoted by the curate of the parish; of which, without unravelling too much of the details of this disgusting history, it may suffice to say that the charges brought against her were so preposterous as to conduce only to the defeat and disgrace of the fabricators.

As the imputation of fanaticism was among the means employed at this time to depreciate the character of this estimable lady, and embarrass her efforts in the cause of God and the soul, her general correspondence might be referred to as affording a sufficient defence against a charge so malicious and groundless; but a letter written by her a little while before this aggression was made upon her time, her peace, and her character,—to a young curate recently settled in a parish which was one of the most busy scenes of her benevolence, offers itself as peculiarly suited to our present purpose. The biographer, in carrying her through this stormy period, has only to fling around her a mantle taken from the rich fabrics of her own wardrobe.

Digitized by Google

Bath.

DEAR SIR,

I have had the pleasure of receiving both your letters; the latter by Mr. Downing yesterday. We had a little conversation. He seems to have the good of his parishes at heart, as far as I could judge by that little. I was sorry I could not comply with his wishes of allowing the children of Bleadon to meet ours at the annual festivity. The immense distance indeed would preclude it, independently of other objections.

I think your account of Axbridge schools encouraging on the whole; but you do not mention their best advantage; I mean, the instructions they receive from you: this comfortable circumstance alone reconciles me to the *moderate* teachers they have, and will, I doubt not, be of importance to them through their whole lives. Our school-mistress gives me great pleasure by telling me what an affectionate regard the serious people of Cheddar have for their minister, and what a good effect your exhortation at Christmas had on many of them. It is pleasant, in a religious point of view, to consider that their value for you seems to have increased in proportion as your preaching has been more strict and evangelical. I believe it will be generally found, with some few exceptions, that no men are so loved or respected as strict gospel ministers, whose lives are consistent; *for consistency is everything;* while the worldly clergy lose their great

Digitized by Google

aim, and do not even please worldly people; so far, I mean, as to be respected and venerated by them; however they may like to associate them in their parties of pleasure or their schemes of dissipation.

I think your definition of faith not an inaccurate one. Your track seems to be right; you have only to pursue it,—to press on; not to count yourself to have attained; to trust in Christ and to preach him, not as our *Redemption* only, for that would be a cheap way of being religious, but as our *Sanctification* also. Frequent and fervent prayer for a greater conformity to the will of God, and a nearer likeness to Christ; a self-denying and a self-renouncing spirit; as much zeal in holiness and good works as if we had no Saviour to trust to, with as absolute a trust in his merits and sacrifice, as if we did nothing ourselves; earnest supplications for His grace and for the illumination of his Spirit—these seem to me to be a sort of general outline, in all which, however short we may come, yet by having it in our eye as the great object of pursuit, the thoughts and desires of the heart being bent on the attainment, in spite of all our frequent failings and great deficiencies, we shall, I doubt not, find that the light within us will grow brighter and brighter unto the perfect day. Some spiritual difficulties and partial blindnesses obstruct, I doubt not, every true believer, on his being first awakened, and greatly retard his progress. All this is necessary to keep us humble and lowly,—that temper of mind which alone can enable us to resemble our gracious

Digitized by Google

Redeemer. An humble self-distrusting soul, which casts all its care upon him, is, I venture to think, far more acceptable to God than many who appear, to human eyes, to be more strong in faith and more confident in security.

I am so very conscious of numberless defects in my own practice, and of feebleness in my own faith, that I feel deeply how little it becomes me to be a preacher. Want of time too, I fear, will prevent my answering your question as fully as I could wish, on the subject of 'saving faith and the most effectual way of preaching it to others.' I may, perhaps, resume the subject at some future time; at present, instead of talking of the *thing*, I will only say a word as to its *effects*. It is certainly the only doctrine which attracts hearers, or which can possibly convert them,—I will not say from one system of opinions to another, for I do not call that conversion, but from sin to holiness, and from the power of Satan to God. If I had not observed that the preachers and the hearers of these doctrines were in general more exemplary in their conduct, and less conformed to the world, than what are called *moral people*, I should not so anxiously recommend them; for after all, *holiness of life* is the only true evidence of a saving faith, and where that best evidence is wanting, I hold a hollow professor, who raves about faith and salvation by Christ, to be no better than a spiritual cheat who deceives himself, and labours to deceive others; and such as these have sometimes disgraced serious Christianity; but the abuse of a thing is no

Digitized by Google

argument against its use. The profession may be right though the professor is wrong.

I heartily wish your application to the bishop may be successful. Humble as your request is, how can it be refused? But God Almighty, in giving you a moderate mind, has given you a richer gift than a mitre. He has also given you a prudent and sober-minded partner: you will, I trust, help each other on in your Christian course. I rejoice that her health is better, and desire to be affectionately remembered to her, as do my sisters.

I am carrying on a scheme to raise money for shoes for our Somerset militia. Out of kindness I make it a point not to send my plan to you, because you should not be laid under the painful obligation of soliciting favours by asking subscriptions of your parishes. Mrs. S—— has subscribed handsomely, and, I believe, will put it about at Cheddar. Your bishop has sent me five guineas; I enclose his lettter.

I am, dear Sir,
With great regard,
Your sincere friend,
H. More.

Disaffection to the church and state was a charge from which the preceding narrative of the exertions and sacrifices made by her in the service of both, is so complete a vindication, as to render a formal defence worse than useless. Through all these attacks, she preserved the dignity of silence,

Digitized by Google

and when advised by Lord Chancellor Loughborough[1] to prosecute the author of a scandalous pamphlet against her, she declared her resolution never, upon any provocation, to embark either in controversy or litigation—a passive pertinacity which tended notoriously to increase the effrontery of her assailants.

For three years this persecution was carried on with unabated virulence, and that too at a time when she seemed to be sinking under the pressure of a severe illness,—an ague of seven months. It was not in accordance with her respect for the church and its ministers, or her strict ideas of propriety, to continue her efforts in a parish where duty and consistency placed her in reluctant opposition to the resident minister; her school at Blagdon was therefore, of necessity, relinquished; notwithstanding the support she received from the Rector, who resided at a distance, and the most respectable part of both clergy and laity, with whom religion was precious, and truth sacred; and who shared with her the honour of being attacked by the same malicious combination. Mrs. More's own admirable letter to the Bishop of Bath and Wells, Dr. Beadon, contains a clear exposition of the malignant aim of this conspiracy, to destroy at once the influence and the peace of one whose feeble

[1] It may be recorded here, that she was induced at different periods of her life, to apply to Lord Chancellor Loughborough, in behalf of two clergymen of great merit, who were unprovided for, and that her request was on each occasion immediately granted. In the latter instance, the presentation was sent directly to herself, that she might have the pleasure of conveying it with her own hands to the friend for whom she had interested herself.

Digitized by Google

frame was sinking under her efforts to promote the happiness and improvement of her species. When this and the other letters to which this disgraceful affair gave occasion, shall come under the observation of the reader, he will regard it as an evil out of which good was brought, in the display it produced of Christian kindness, gentle friendship, and virtuous sympathy.

From Mrs. H. More to the Bishop of Bath and Wells, (Dr. Beadon.)

1801.

My Lord,

It is with deep regret that I find myself compelled to trouble your Lordship with this letter, though your known liberality gives me more courage in taking a step which I should in any case feel it my duty to take. For, however firm my resolution has been, never to answer any of the calumnies under which I have been so long suffering: yet to your Lordship, as my diocesan, I feel myself accountable for my conduct, attacked as it has been, with a wantonness of cruelty which, in civilized places, few persons, especially of my sex, have been called to suffer. To the defenceless state of our sex, and to my declared resolution to return no answers, I attribute in great part this long and unmitigated persecution. I am not going to make your Lordship a party. Nor am I going to clear myself by accusing others. Of my assailants I will speak as little as possible. I wish I could avoid naming them altogether.

Digitized by Google

It will be out of my power to enter on a full vindication of myself against charges with which I am not fully acquainted. A wish to keep my mind calm, in a dangerous illness of seven months, was a reason with me for reading but very little of what has appeared against me; I can only notice such of the more material charges as have come to my knowledge.

I had so fully persuaded myself, that I had for many years, especially in the late awful crisis, been devoting my time and humble talents to the promotion of loyalty, good morals, and attachment to church and state among the poorer people, that I was not prepared for the shock, when the charge of sedition, disaffection, and a general aim to corrupt the principles of the community, suddenly burst upon me. In vain have I been looking round me for any pretence on which could be founded such astonishing imputations.

Mr. Bere thought so well of my principles, as to importune me to establish a school in his parish; lamenting its extreme profligacy, and his own inability to do any good to the rising generation. There were witnesses present when he repeatedly made these applications, which I refused, pleading want of health, time, and money. I also declared my unwillingness to undertake it, unless it was the wish of the parish. He then sent his churchwardens as a deputation from the parish; and I yielded at last to these repeated intreaties, which, I trust, will acquit me of the charge of *intrusion*.

As to connection with conventicles of any kind, I never had any. Had I been irregular, should I

Digitized by Google

not have gone sometimes, during my winter residence at Bath, to Lady Huntingdon's chapel, a place of great occasional resort? Should I never have gone to some of Whitfield's or Wesley's tabernacles in London, where I have spent a long spring for near thirty years successively? Should I not have strayed now and then into some methodist meeting in the country? Yet not one of these things have I ever done. For an answer to the charge of my having ever made any application to get Mr. Bere removed from his curacy, I refer your Lordship to Dr. Moss and Dr. Crossman, in case you are not satisfied with the declaration of both in Dr. Crossman's printed letter to Sir A. Elton.

Mr. Bere's letter to me, dated Jan. 4, 1799, complaining of Young's Monday Meeting, which I was prevented answering by a long illness, was, in fact, virtually answered immediately, by my sister's writing to Young to put a stop to the irregularities complained of; which was done. A proof that this ground of complaint had ceased to exist when Mr. Bere made his first attack on me in the beginning of April, 1800, is afforded by a very friendly letter which I have by me, from Mrs. Bere, dated March 8, 1800, only about three weeks before Mr. Bere's open attack, and near a year and a quarter after the complaint had been made and redressed. Mr. Bere's affidavits, taken by himself, in his own cause, which were flatly contradicted by counter evidence, and which having no dates to the facts which they attest, would never have been admitted in a court of justice, have all a retrospective refer-

Digitized by Google

ence to one, two, four, and even six years back. I should add, that having heard that Mr. Bere had thrown out from the pulpit some insinuations against the school, I went to him, and assured him that I was ready to withdraw the school, if it had not his entire approbation. Again he implored me not to deprive his parish of such a benefit.

When Mr. Bere sent me his hostile letter, menacing the schoolmaster, April, 1800, I was in London, and being unable at that distance to inquire fairly into the complaint, I wrote twice to Mr. Bere, earnestly requesting him to refer the whole to Sir A. Elton, as a respectable and judicious magistrate in the neighbourhood, and begging they would investigate the business together. This Mr. Bere twice positively refused. I could have no partial motives in the reference, for I knew so little of Sir A. Elton, that he had never been in my house, whereas he had been long known to Mr. Bere, and I could not have suggested a more fair and peaceable mode of setting all to rights.

The ground on which human prudence, especially judging *after* the event, may most reasonably condemn me, is, that I did not instantly dismiss Young the schoolmaster. I grant that it would have saved me infinite distress. But I not only thought myself bound to protect an innocent man, whom I still consider to have been falsely accused; but I was also convinced that, as the event has proved, the object in view was not merely to ruin *him*, but to strike at the principle of *all* my schools, and to stigmatize them as seminaries of fanaticism, vice, and

Digitized by Google

sedition. I was highly displeased with Young when I found he had allowed two or three of these silly people to attempt extempore prayer. That vulgar people will be vulgar in their religion, and that illiterate people will talk ignorantly, who will deny? But this had nothing to do with my very large Sunday School, where I never heard that any impropriety was complained of. No such complaint had ever reached me from any of my other schools. Young profited so well by my reprimand for this injudicious measure, that his conduct was ever after perfectly correct. Nor should I have overlooked this fault had not his morals and industry been exemplary, and had I ever in the course of ten years found him at all fanatical. Allow me to add that he now gives the highest satisfaction to the opulent and very respectable family of the Latouches, near Dublin, who received him to superintend their large charitable institutions, after having read all the charges against him, and whose attestation to his good conduct, together with that of Lady Harriet Daly, and Baron Daly, I shall trouble your Lordship to peruse. To remove prejudices, however, I had resolved to place him elsewhere, had I continued the Blagdon school, which, together with its master had been restored (after I had dissolved it) at the earnest request of Dr. Crossman, and with the consent of Dr. Moss. But after Mr. Bere's restoration to the curacy, no intreaties of Dr. Crossman could induce me to continue it. I took a journey to Dr. Crossman's house in the west, on purpose to assure him that I did not withdraw my

Digitized by Google

school from resentment, but that I was afraid the continuance of it might be considered as an act of opposition to Mr. Bere; whereas by putting an end to the school, I thought I should disarm him of every plea for further hostility. This sacrifice to peace proved ineffectual. I abolished my school with regret (full and flourishing as it was) for the second time on a Sunday in September 1801; and on the Wednesday following the most hostile of all his pamphlets against me was advertised. May I be permitted to add that Dr. Maclaine, who spent great part of the two last summers at Blagdon, knew much of the school and its master. Allow me to refer your Lordship to him. In the learned and venerable translator of Mosheim, you will not expect to find an advocate for fanaticism.

It has been repeatedly said, that, being a Calvinist myself, I always employed Calvinistic teachers. I never knowingly employed one. As to Calvinism or Arminianism, I should be very sorry if such terms were known in my schools; it never having been my object to teach dogmas and opinions, but to train up good members of society, and plain practical Christians. I have discharged two teachers for discovering a tendency to enthusiasm, and one for being accused of it, without discovering such tendency. One experiment was made, for I shall be perfectly ingenuous. An inferior teacher being wanted under an excellent mistress, the clergyman ventured to employ a poor man of the parish, from having observed his constant attendance at church, and his good moral conduct, though he went to the

Digitized by Google

Methodist meeting. He earnestly hoped that from the man's soberness of mind, and regularity at church, he might become entirely detached from the Methodist societies, and be the instrument of detaching others also; but not finding this to be the case, the minister who had engaged him was convinced of the expediency of his removal, and dismissed him with my full concurrence. The Methodists are in general hostile to my schools, for attracting, as they say, the people from them to the church, and I have been assured that some of their preachers have inveighed against me by name in their sermons.

As to myself, I had hoped that the numerous occasions which have occurred in eight printed volumes, of expressing my sentiments, both religious and political, might have precluded the necessity of a formal confession of faith. I refer your Lordship to those volumes. The last chapter of Vol. VIII. contains my full and undisguised view of the leading doctrines of Christianity. See from page 272—320.

Those doctrines I conceive, (for I am but a poor divine,) to be equally embraced by pious Arminians and Calvinists. Lest this should be thought evasive, I have no hesitation in declaring that I do not entertain any tenet *peculiar* to Calvinism. Let me not, however, in stating my own opinions, lose sight of that candour towards good men who think differently in a few points from me, which I have always so sedulously cultivated. I admire many, especially of the old writers, of that class, such as Hooker, Bishops Hall, Hopkins, and many others;

Digitized by Google

but I admire them, not for their Calvinism, but for their devout spirit, their deep views of Christianity, their practical piety, and their holy vigilance. While they inculcate faith as the principle, never do they lose sight of purity of practice as the necessary result.

I had hoped that my zealous attachment to the *church* must have been inferred from a multitude of incidental passages in my writings, particularly in the sixth volume; more conclusive perhaps from being incidental and frequent, than a specific and elaborate declaration would have been. For it is not so much from an insulated passage, as from the general tenour and spirit of his writings, that an author's principles may be deduced. Having observed from the beginning of the French revolution, the arts used by the jacobinical writers to alienate the people from the church, by undermining their respect for its ministers, I made it a leading principle in the multitude of little tracts which I wrote purposely to counteract their pestilent pamphlets, to introduce into almost every one of them, an exemplary parish-minister. As works of imagination had been employed to induce a contempt for the clerical character, I thought these fictitious characters the most popular vehicles in which to convey an antidote to the reigning disease, and that by assiduously infusing this spirit into the very amusements of the lower classes, I might thus lead them insensibly to the habit of loving and reverencing the clergy.

Nor was I less amazed to find my *political* prin-

Digitized by Google

ciples stigmatized by my accusers. Besides their general tendency, some of my tracts go directly to the defence of the constitution. Whether they were of any use in the moment of danger, it becomes not me to say. My enemies being judges, I should hope they were; as I can produce several letters of undeservedly high praise from those who are now loudest in the cry against me.

It has been broadly intimated, that I have laboured to spread French principles; and one of my schools is specifically charged with having *prayed for the success of the French.* Am I seriously to defend myself against such charges? I plead guilty to having written an answer to Dupont, the atheistical orator of France, and of having devoted the profits of this slight work, amounting to considerably above £200. to the relief of the French emigrant clergy. To perversions of this sort I am almost daily accustomed.

When I first established my schools, the poor women used to send crying infants of two or three years old, to the great disturbance of the rest, while they kept at home children of a fitter age to learn. This led us to make it one of the rules, not to receive any under six years old. I told the mothers our's was a school, and not a nursery. On this simple circumstance has been built the astonishing charge, that I did not want to instruct children, but to pervert grown people. There is no end to instances of this sort, but a few may serve as a specimen. Not only are conversations printed which never took place, between me and persons

Digitized by Google

whom I do not know, but about persons whose names I never heard. I am accused of being the abettor, not only of fanaticism and sedition, but of thieving and prostitution. To all these accusations or innuendos I have never answered one word; though some of my best friends advised me to answer them by a prosecution. This I declined, though I confess that the charge of murder could scarcely have shocked me more than that of disaffection or sedition.

Allow me to quote one passage from another letter from Mrs. Bere which I happen to have by me: 'The school goes on well. There seems to be a serious spirit working for good among the common people. Mr. Bere desires me to say, and he thinks it is saying a great deal, that two sessions and two assizes are past, and a third of each nearly approaching, and neither as prosecutor nor prisoner, plaintiff nor defendant, has any one of this parish, once so notorious for crimes and litigations, appeared. And moreover warrants for wood stealing, pilfering, &c. are quite out of fashion.' Your lordship will have the goodness to compare this passage with the antecedent accusations.

I am assured by those who have carefully read the different pamphlets against me, that whilst I am accused in one of seditious practices, I am reviled in another as an enemy to liberty; in one of being disaffected to church and state, in another of being a ministerial hireling and a tool of government. Nay the very tracts are specified for which 'the *venal* hireling' was paid by the administration (by Mr. Pitt, I think). In one I am charged with

Digitized by Google

praying for the success of the French, in another of fomenting, by my writings, the war with France, and savagely triumphing at every victory over what the author calls 'those friends to the general amelioration of human society;' I am accused of delighting in a war, 'which we madly carried on—which began in iniquity, and ended in disgrace.' In one place, 'of not believing' one word of Christianity; in another of idolizing the Athanasian creed, which 'complicated piece of metaphysics' the author declares the church might spare, and which he advises me, when expunged from the Liturgy, 'to order myself to be wrapped in as a winding-sheet.'

But to return to my schools. When I settled in this country thirteen years ago, I found the poor in many of the villages sunk in a deplorable state of ignorance and vice. There were, I think, no Sunday schools in the whole district, except one in my own parish, which had been established by our respectable rector, and another in the adjoining parish of Churchill. This drew me to the more neglected villages, which being distant, made it very laborious. Not one school there did I ever attempt to establish without the hearty concurrence of the clergyman of the parish. My plan of instruction is extremely simple and limited. They learn, on week-days, such coarse works as may fit them for servants. I allow of no writing for the poor. My object is not to make fanatics, but to train up the lower classes in habits of industry and piety. I knew no way of teaching morals but by

Digitized by Google

teaching principles; or of inculcating Christian principles without imparting a good knowledge of scripture. I own I have laboured this point diligently. My sisters and I always teach them ourselves every Sunday, except during our absence in the winter. By being out about thirteen hours, we have generally contrived to visit two schools the same day, and to carry them to their respective churches. When we had more schools we commonly visited them on a Sunday. The only books we use in teaching are two little tracts called 'Questions for the Mendip Schools,' (to be had of Hatchard.) 'The Church Catechism,' (these are framed, and half-a-dozen hung up in the room.) The Catechism, broken into short questions, Spelling Books, Psalter, Common Prayer, Testament, Bible. The little ones repeat 'Watts's Hymns.' The Collect is learned every Sunday. They generally learn the Sermon on the Mount, with many other chapters and Psalms. Finding that what the children learned at school they commonly lost at home by the profaneness and ignorance of their parents, it occurred to me in some of the larger parishes to invite the latter to come at six on the Sunday evening, for an hour, to the school, together with the elder scholars. A plain printed sermon and a printed prayer is read to them, and a psalm is sung. I am not bribed by my taste, for, unluckily, I do not delight in music, but observing that singing is a help to devotion in others, I thought it right to allow the practice.

For many years I have given away annually, nearly two hundred Bibles, Common Prayer Books,

Digitized by Google

and Testaments. To teach the poor to read without providing them with *safe* books, has always appeared to me an improper measure, and this consideration induced me to enter upon the laborious undertaking of the Cheap Repository Tracts.

In some parishes where the poor are numerous, such as Cheddar, and the distressed mining villages of Shipham and Rowbarrow, I have instituted, with considerable expence to myself, friendly benefit societies for poor women, which have proved a great relief to the sick and lying-in, especially in the late seasons of scarcity. We have in one parish *only*, an accumulation of between two and three hundred pounds (the others in proportion); this I have placed out in the funds. The late lady of the Manor of Cheddar, in addition to her kindness to my institutions there, during her life, left, at her death, a legacy for the club, and another for the school, as a testimony to her opinion of the utility of both. We have two little annual festivities for the children and poor women of these clubs, which are always attended by a large concourse of gentry and clergy.

At one of these public meetings Mr. Bere declared that since the institution of the schools he could now dine in peace, for that where he used to issue ten warrants, he was not now called on for two.

I shall take the liberty of sending your lordship the rules of my school, which have never been altered, and of referring you to the testimonials (printed in the public papers) of the churchwardens and principal inhabitants of some of those parishes

Digitized by Google

where my conduct has been most attacked, to ascertain whether I have been used to act in concert with the minister, and whether my schools have been of any use in improving morals, or attracting the people to church.

My schools were always honoured with the full sanction of the late bishop; of which I have even recent testimonials. It does not appear that any one person who has written against them, except Mr. Bere, ever saw them. I am not accustomed to refer to others for my character; I am not accustomed to vindicate it myself, but it is natural to wish that it should not be taken from avowed enemies, or total strangers. My friendships and connections have not been among the suspected part of mankind. My attachment to the established church, is, and has ever been, entire, cordial, inviolable, and, until now, unquestioned. Its doctrines and discipline I equally approve. I have long had the honour of reckoning many of its most distinguished dignitaries amongst my friends.

I am too deeply sensible of the infirmity and evil of my own mind not to allow readily that much error and imperfection may have been mixed with my attempts to do a little good. But it would be false humility not to say that the whole drift and tendency has been right to the very best of my power. Mine is so far a singular case that I not only feel myself guiltless of the motives and actions imputed to me, but I am conscious that all my little strength has been employed in the very contrary direction. Your Lordship's enlightened mind

Digitized by Google

will give me credit for studiously abstaining from what would, with ordinary judges, have best served my cause; I mean a resentful retaliation on the conduct and motives of my adversaries.

I would appeal to any candid judge whether in an undertaking so difficult and extensive, while I was living far from all the schools, five, ten, and even fifteen miles, it would be wonderful if I should have been sometimes (it has not happened often) mistaken in the instruments I have employed; and if the most vigilant prudence could do more than discharge such as were proved to be improper. In a few instances, where none could be found properly qualified on the spot, I have employed strangers, but in general the teachers have been taken from the parish, on the recommendation of the minister, or the principal inhabitants, or both. All the under teachers at Blagdon were recommended by Mr. Bere. The obnoxious Wedmore schoolmaster had notice to quit as soon after I came from London as the complaint was made, and was actually removed as soon as his wife recovered from her lying-in. I thought nothing could be more promising than this man. I found him carrying on a little trade in Bristol, after having failed in a greater, and he was an active member of the volunteer corps, and a tax-gatherer of the parish.

I need not inform your lordship why the illiterate, when they become religious, are more liable to enthusiasm than the better-informed. They have also a coarse way of expressing their religious sentiments, which often appears to be enthusiasm,

Digitized by Google

when it is only vulgarity or quaintness. But I am persuaded your lordship will allow that this does not furnish a reason why the poor should be left destitute of religious instruction. That the knowledge of the Bible should lay men more open to the delusions of fanaticism on the one hand, or of jacobinism on the other, appears so unlikely, that I should have thought the probability lay all on the other side.

I do not vindicate enthusiasm; I dread it. But can the possibility that a few should become enthusiasts be justly pleaded as an argument for giving them *all* up to actual vice and barbarism.

In one of the principal pamphlets against me, it is asserted that my writings *ought to be burned by the hands of the common hangman.* In most of them it is affirmed, that my principles and actions are corrupt and mischievous in no common degree. If the grosser crimes alleged against me be true, I am not only unfit to be allowed to teach poor children to read, but I am unfit to be tolerated in any class of society. If, on the contrary, the heavier charges should prove not to be true, may it not furnish a presumption that the less are equally unfounded? There is scarcely any motive so pernicious, nor any hypocrisy so deep, to which my plans have not been attributed; yet I have neither improved my interest nor my fortune by them. I am not of a sex to expect preferment, nor of a temper to court favour; nor was I so ignorant of mankind, as to look for praise by a mean so little calculated to obtain it; though, perhaps, I did not reckon on such a degree

Digitized by Google

of obloquy. If vanity were my motive, it has been properly punished. If hypocrisy, I am hastening fast to answer for it at a tribunal, compared with which all human opinion weighs very light indeed; in view of which the sacrifice which I have been called to make of health, peace, and reputation shrinks into nothing.

And now, my Lord, I come to what has been the ultimate object of this too tedious letter—a request to know what is your Lordship's pleasure? I have too high an opinion of your wisdom and candour to suspect the equity of your determination. I know too well what I owe to the station you fill, to dispute your authority, or to oppose your commands. If it be your will that my remaining schools should be abolished, I may lament your decision, but I will obey it. My deep reverence for the laws and institutions of my country, inspires me with a proportionate veneration for all constituted authorities, whether in church or state. If I be not permitted to employ the short remnant of my life (which has been nearly destroyed by these prolonged attacks,) in being, in any small measure and degree, actively useful, I will at least set my accusers an example of obedience to those superiors whom the providence of God has set over me, and whom next to Him, I am bound to obey.

I have the honour to be,
With the highest respect,
My Lord,
Your Lordship's most obedient,
H. More.

Digitized by Google

From the Bishop of Bath and Wells (Dr. Beadon), to Mrs. H. More.

Stanford Rivers.

DEAR MADAM,

I had yesterday the honour of receiving your letter of the 24th instant, and am very sorry you should have thought it necessary to give yourself the trouble of entering into so long a vindication of your political and religious principles, against the malicious and groundless attacks which have been lately made upon both. I wanted no declaration or evidence of either your faith or your patriotism, more than what may be derived from your numerous and avowed publications; and I can only say, that if you are not a sincere and zealous friend to the constitutional establishment both in Church and State, you are one of the greatest hypocrites, as well as one of the best writers, in his Majesty's dominions.

With respect to Sunday Schools, established upon the principles, and conducted upon the plan which you describe, I have no hesitation in saying, that I think them admirably calculated to improve the morals of the lower classes of the people, and as such, entitled to the approbation and support of every friend to religion and good order. Do what we can, abuses will make their way into the best institutions, as, notwithstanding all your care and vigilance, you have found, and acknowledge to be the case of your own; but where the abuses are

Digitized by Google

corrected as soon as discovered, they will not lessen the credit of the institutions themselves, in the opinion of any candid or considerate person. So far, therefore from desiring that your remaining schools should be abolished, I heartily wish them success; and so long as they continue to be under the inspection and guidance of yourself, and the several parochial ministers where they are established, you may assure yourself they will have my protection, and every encouragement I can give them.

Mrs. Beadon desires your acceptance of her best compliments, and I have the honour to be, with great truth and respect,

Dear Madam,

Your most obedient and faithful humble servant,

R. BATH AND WELLS.

From the Bishop of Durham, (Dr. Barrington) to Mrs. H. More.

Mongewell, Jan. 1801.

Nothing, my dear Madam, can exceed the astonishment with which I heard of the treatment you have received. To have met with disappointment, injury, and calumny, where you had the justest reason to expect success, respect, and gratitude, were trials of a severe kind; to which few Christians, but those who have strictly disciplined their minds in the gospel school, are equal. Trials are the tests of virtue; and happy is that

Digitized by Google

believer in a Saviour whose life was one continued series of trials, who views them in their proper light, and whose religious character is rendered brighter by the furnace of affliction. High as I hold your talents, and the application of those talents to the most important of all purposes, the diffusion of Christianity among *all* ranks of men, and the impressing its truths on the minds of the uneducated by the best modes of instruction, you yet rise in my esteem and admiration by the humility, resignation, and forgiveness which you have manifested on an occasion which so eminently called for the exertion of these duties. The consciousness of having discharged these duties in the hour of trial must administer consolation to your spirits, should they chance to be depressed by bodily weakness. But their best remedy will be the approbation of your Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. That the commencement of the next year may prove more propitious to your prospects on this side the grave, and to the extension of your most beneficial seminaries, than that of the present, is the joint wish of Mrs. Barrington, and

Your faithful and affectionate servant,

S. DUNELM.

Pray remember us very kindly to the only one of your sisters, Miss Martha More, to whom we have the good fortune to be known.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

Priory, Monday, 1801.

MY DEAR SIR,

You are so kindly sympathizing, that I am led to tell you my troubles. The farmers at Wedmore have formerly presented me at the Archdeacon's visitation last week, for teaching the poor without a license. They say they will never rest till they have worried me out of the parish, and as they have employed an attorney of bad character, they will, I fear, be able to give me a good deal of trouble. I have embarked at a great expence in this scheme, in which there is such a prospect of doing good, that I think it would be conferring with flesh and blood to give it up, especially as it would be too much consulting my ease. This, together with the bad accounts I get from home, comes rather heavily upon me; but God's will be done. My chief concern is, lest it should prejudice our cause in the other parishes, in which there is a combination of two bad clergymen, who I suspect are at the bottom of this.

Poor Patty, in bad health herself—fights manfully, and combats well with these domestic sorrows. She is holding our annual club-feasts, and feasting six or seven hundred each day with outward cheerfulness. It puts me in mind of poor actors, who play their comic parts gaily on the stage, when, perhaps, they have all sorts of miseries at home. You will be pleased to hear that —— was so much

Digitized by Google

affected at one of these meetings, which they attended, that *he* declared he would not have missed it for fifty guineas.

I shall be really obliged to you for 'Saurin,' whom I greatly admire.

God bless you and your's here, and to all eternity.

H. MORE.

From the same to the same.

Cowslip Green, 1801.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

In Blagdon is still "a voice heard, lamentation and mourning," and at Cowslip "Rachel is still weeping for her children, and refuses to be comforted because they are not" instructed. This heavy blow has almost bowed me to the ground. It was only last night I began to get a little sleep. My reason and my religion know that it is permitted by that gracious being, who uses sometimes bad men for his instruments; but religion and reason do not operate much upon the *nerves*. I doubt not but that he who can bring much real good out of much seeming evil, will eventually turn this shocking business to his glory; and even already, a *little* light seems to be springing out of this darkness, as some eyes which seemed to be judicially blinded begin to open. Though I knew that B—— and his adherents had spread abroad the most flagitious reports respecting my political and religious princi-

Digitized by Google

ples, yet I own I was inexpressibly shocked the other night at Patty's receiving from the Bishop of London a most ambiguous and alarming note, expressing the utmost terror on my account, yet refusing to explain himself; saying, if what was reported were true, she would understand what he meant. All we can collect from this obscure giving out, but which out of tenderness he seems to have half concealed, is, that this *mock* trial has been fabricated by B——'s emissaries into an *official* one, and that I am found guilty of sedition, and, perhaps, taken up and sent to prison. Remember this is mere surmise. Have you had any communication with the Bishop of London, or have these strange reports reached *you?*

I have at last got a letter from Dr. Moss, polite and handsome as to my motives, character, and usefulness, but quite blind as to the atrocity of B——'s conduct towards me, and ignorant of the general worthlessness of his character. I pity those men in high stations for not being more in the way of ascertaining the real characters of their clergy: it might, to be sure, be done one way—by employing conscientious and pious men in the inquiry: but there is a sort of *esprit de corps*, which makes them support each other in public, even when (as in the present case) their private language is different. Dr. Moss, however totally exculpates himself from having any hand in this famous trial, expresses much regret at their indecent rejoicings, and laments the loss of so many institutions to the parish—thinks me obstinate, but, I believe, nothing worse.

I mean to re-read, for the fiftieth time, your

Digitized by Google

chapter on the overvaluing of human estimation. I have perhaps been too anxious on that head. Yet few people have cared less about *general* opinion, except as it has attacked me in that vital vulnerable part, on which one's usefulness depends. We received a kind letter from Mrs. H—— during my illness, for which pray thank her. It is a great comfort she goes on so well.

I have had a return of my complaint, and am still very poorly. Patty behaves nobly, and only works the harder for all these attacks; she has been, in all this weather, on a three day's mission to Wedmore, where things look very smiling: our persecutors have become our admirers, now they say they have seen our goings on, and that we are not *methody people;* and that rich farmer who presented us at the visitation for *teaching French principles*, sends his own family to the school and the reading, both of which are very full; but I greatly dread B——'s success at Blagdon will induce a second visit to Wedmore, where he first stirred up the opposition. My wounds are still fresh and raw, and want much wine and oil—this your kind letters never fail to administer, but I hope I strive to look for higher and better consolations; and that these may be granted me I am persuaded I have your prayers.

Your's very truly and affectionately,

H. More.

I have some good things to tell you as to the increase of religious clergymen among us.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

Cowslip Green, 1801.

You will see by the enclosed that things are not yet ripe for the execution of any of your pious purposes in Westmoreland.

It is now all over with us at Blagdon. I struggled hard to keep my footing, and would not have valued any obloquy on my character while the least chance of doing good remained; but when I considered the dreadful prejudices which my perseverance was every day exciting, I could no longer answer it to my conscience to persevere. Among B——'s affidavits, which are 'as plenty as blackberries,' one was taken from a lunatic, whom as such I have helped to maintain. People start out of ditches and from under hedges to listen to the talk of our poor pious labourers as they are at work, and then go and make oath, and then Mr. B—— (having doubtless set them to listen) receives their depositions in his own cause. I really did not take the pains to read them through, they consisted of such wretched stuff. Six, I think, went to prove that Young was a *Calvinist;* several that he was heard to pray extempore in *private;* and one accused him of the heavy sin of having done it on the public nights.

Mr. Whalley has done himself great honour by writing a strong and very spirited state of the case to the Bishop, expressing his strong conviction of the moral benefit to the country from

Digitized by Google

all my schools, his firm belief in the integrity of the Blagdon master, and describing at large his having witnessed, together with Dr. Maclaine, Mrs. Holroyd, and many other equally respectable testimonies, the conduct of the school for a whole Sunday, the practical and useful mode of instruction given there, and the regularity and good order of the parish. I own I did think *his* testimony would have been of use. But, *the man had prayed extempore*—he might be a *Calvinist! The church was in danger!*

My dear friend, I have prayed and struggled earnestly not to be quite subdued in my *mind*—but I cannot command my *nerves*, and though pretty well during the bustle of the day, yet I get such disturbed and agitated nights, that I could not answer for my lasting if the thing were to go on much longer; this is such a specimen of the state of religion, that *I* too, really think the church *is* in danger, though in another and far more awful sense.

Sir A. Elton is devoted to our cause, and only waits B——'s recovery from a fit of the gout, (as he would take no advantage of him) to re-examine those *oath-takers*. He is still sanguine that good will arise out of all this evil. A volume of letters has been written—happily for *me*, he will not allow *me* to write any, it affects me so much. "How shall I give thee up Ephraim," is my frequent exclamation, as I walk in my garden, and look at the steeple and the village of Blagdon. I know if I had a lively faith, I should rejoice at being thought worthy to suffer in the cause of Christ; but I cannot

Digitized by Google

help mourning for our Jerusalem—I mourn to see that nothing is thought a crime, but what they are pleased to call enthusiasm. I heartily wish I were a greater enthusiast in *their* sense of the word.

May God bless you!

Your's very affectionately,

H. More.

From the same to the same.

1801.

My dear Sir,

I was truly sorry to hear of your detention at Broomfield, (and more especially for the cause) when I was indulging the idea that you were ranging far and wide, in full liberty and relaxation. I shall rejoice to hear that Mrs. W. is recovered, and that you are on the wing. As to your request about giving hints for a school, I know nothing so difficult. To shew, however, my disposition to obey your orders, I have inclosed a sheet of hints, which I fear will be of little use. Indeed, it seems just now particularly wrong in me to attempt to teach others, who am myself so disgraced, traduced, and vilified. Oh! may I be supported by seeing Him who is invisible! It is circulated among the worldly and Socinian clergy, that I have been in the constant habit of praying for the success of the French in my schools! How I shall one day admire that infinite wisdom, which has thus decreed that I should be wounded just where I am most sensitive! My

Digitized by Google

gracious Father, I doubt not, saw (though I knew it not) that I was too anxious about human opinion. You have, doubtless, seen the Anti-Jacobin for June. I could give you a fresh instance of the treachery of that editor, and you would see how every thing has concurred to injure me. O for more faith, and more deadness to such a world! If it does but help to purify and fit me for a better, I ought to count it a light affliction. B— is playing some fresh trick daily, refuses to resign, and threatens an appeal to the Archbishop, and to prosecute my Diocesan.

Your's ever,

H. MORE.

HINTS.

(Enclosed in the above.)

In the morning I open school with one of the Sunday School Prayers, from the Cheap Repository Tract. I have a Bible class—Testament class—Psalter class. Those who cannot read at all, are questioned out of the first little question book for the Mendip schools. In instructing the Bible or Testament class, I always begin with the Parables, which we explain to them in the most familiar manner, one at a time, till they understand that one so perfectly, that they are able to give me back the full sense of it.

We begin with the three parables in the fifteenth chapter of St. Luke, first fixing in their minds the literal sense, and then teaching them to make the

Digitized by Google

practical application. When their understandings are a little exercised, we dwell for a long time on the three first chapters of Genesis, endeavouring from these to establish them in the doctrine of the fall of man. We keep them a good while close to the same subject, making them read the same parts so often, that the most important texts shall adhere to their memories; because upon this knowledge only can I ground my general conversation with them so as to be intelligible. I also encourage them by little bribes of a penny a chapter, to get by heart certain fundamental parts of Scripture, for instance, the promises, and prophecies, and confession of sin—such as the 9th of Isaiah, 53rd of Isaiah, and 51st Psalm—the Beatitudes, and indeed the whole sermon on the Mount—together with the most striking parts of our Saviour's discourses in the gospel of St. John. It is my grand endeavour to make every thing as entertaining as I can, and to try to engage their affections; to excite in them the love of God; and particularly to awaken their gratitude to their Redeemer.

When they seem to get a little tired, we change the scene; and by standing up, and singing a hymn, their attention is relieved.

I have never tried the system of terror, because I have found that kindness produces a better end by better means.

About five o'clock we dismiss the little ones with a prayer and a hymn. It would be an excellent method (and has been practised with success,) to invite the grown-up children and their parents, to

Digitized by Google

come to the school at six o'clock, and get some kind lady (which answers better than a teacher,) to read a little sermon to them—'Burder's Village Sermons' are very proper.

Those who attend four Sundays, without intermission, and come in time for morning prayer, receive a penny every fourth Sunday; but if they fail once, the other three Sundays go for nothing, and they must begin again. Once in every six or eight weeks I give a little gingerbread. Once a year I distribute little books according to merit—those who deserve most, get a Bible—second rate merit gets a Prayer-book—the rest, Cheap Repository Tracts.

Once a year, also, each scholar receives some one article of dress; the boy, a hat, shirt, or pair of shoes, according to their wants—the big girls, a calico apron and cap—the little ones, a cap, and a tippet of calico.

From the Rev. J. Newton to Mrs. H. More.

1801.

MY DEAR MADAM,

"Blessed are ye when men revile and persecute you, and speak all manner of evil against you, *falsely*" and for "*my name's sake.*"

When I consider whose words are these, I am more disposed to congratulate than to condole with you, on the unjust and hard treatment you have met with.

Yet I do feel for you. These things are not

Digitized by Google

joyous but grievous at the time; it is *afterwards* that they yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. Cheer up, my dear friend—tarry thou the Lord's leisure. Be strong and he shall comfort thy heart. Depend upon it all shall turn out to the furtherance of that gospel, for which you are engaged. See Psalm xxxvii. 4, 5, 6. and Rev. iii. 7—13;—*that* whole message belongs to you, and I trust you will live to see it fulfilled. When Sennacherib insulted Hezekiah, and blasphemed the God of Israel, the king said, 'Answer him not. I will put the cause into the Lord's hands, and he will plead for us, better than we could for ourselves.' So the event proved in the issue. I have little doubt but the stir that has been made, will conduce to your vindication and honour. But if not, the Lord will honour and own you, before the assembled world, in the great day of his appearance. In the mean time let us pray for and pity those who know not what they do. A word from him can open the eyes of the blind, and soften the heart of stone.

The new year we have begun is likely to prove very eventful. The eye of sense starts at the prospect, but faith sees a hand guiding in the darkest cloud, and reports, that the Lord reigns, let the earth be never so unquiet. He is carrying on his great designs, in a way worthy of himself, and with an especial regard to his church. To manifest his glory in the salvation of all who believe in the Son of his love; and that his character, in the combination of his infinite wisdom, power, holiness, justice, sovereignty, mercy, grace, and truth,

Digitized by Google

might be fully exhibited to the universe, was, I believe, the great purpose for which the earth was formed. Prov. viii. 23—31.

He does and will overrule all the designs of men to the furtherance and accomplishment of his holy plan. Not only his friends, but his enemies contribute to it. The wrath of man, so far as it is permitted to act, shall praise him; and the remainder of their wrath, whatever they mean more than is subservient to his purpose, he will restrain. Moses and Joshua were his willing servants, but Sennacherib and Nebuchadnezzar were equally his servants, though they regarded him not; they acted under his secret commission, and could do no more than he appointed them. It is the same now with Bonaparte. When I heard of his unexpected escape from Syria, and arrival in France, I instantly concluded that the Lord had some important business for him to do. And when he has done his work, he will be laid aside, as many who have been employed in services, (not so fit for the godly,) have been before him. We perhaps have been tempted almost to wish that some persons had not been born, or had been taken away, before they had opportunity of doing so much mischief. But what the Lord said to Pharaoh, will apply to all who are like-minded. *For this very cause I raised thee up.* Pharaoh's oppression of Israel prepared the way for their deliverance, and issued in his final overthrow. He permits his people to be brought low, that his interposition in their behalf may become the more signal, and the more glorious.

Digitized by Google

When I consider all second causes and instruments, as mere saws and hammers in the workman's hands, and that they can neither give us pleasure nor pain, but as our Lord and Saviour is pleased to employ them, I feel a degree of peace and composure. I have been long aiming to learn this lesson, but I am a slow scholar; and if I hope I have made an attainment one day, perhaps the very next I have to learn it over again. Appearances make me anxious, and I forget the report of faith. But though we believe not, He abideth faithful. I am, at least in my deliberate judgment, firmly assured, that he has done, still does, and still will do, all things well. How little can we judge of this great drama by a single scene! But when we see the catastrophe, how shall we love, and praise, and wonder!

Dear Miss Catlett was lately visited by a fever, with some alarming symptoms; but our great physician heard prayer. He soon rebuked the fever and it left her. She was abroad again within the week. Help us with your prayers and praises. We both love you and all your sisters. We still remember the kindness and pleasures of Cowslip Green. May the Lord bless you all with that wisdom which cometh from above, and with that peace which the world can neither give nor take away.

The old man of seventy-six is still favoured with perfect health, and can still preach as loud, as long, and as often, as formerly. He is still heard with acceptance, and has cause to hope the Lord owns

Digitized by Google

his ministry. 'O to grace how great a debtor,' is the poor African blasphemer and profligate.

I am, my dear Madam,
Your very affectionate and much obliged,
JOHN NEWTON.

From the Rev. R. Cecil to Mrs. H. More.

Dec. 1801.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Mr. William Hoare, who has never visited me lately without giving me pleasure, has, in his last visit, given me pain. He tells me you are very ill. I took comfort however in recollecting you could not *die*, nor be even *wounded*, whatever change your mortal frame might be appointed to undergo. Mr. Hoare also brought two or three copies of a pamphlet entitled 'The *Contrast*,' (the only thing I have seen on your subject) which could not but fill me with indignation at the insolence and falsehood of a man of my order—but *Hæc novimus esse nihil*; I have lived just long enough to wonder at nothing. I have met with things of this kind myself, which however they might surprise me at the moment as possibilities, or irritate me as unprovoked insults, a little time helped me to contemplate as ridiculous dreams. "A lying tongue," my experience (as well as the scriptures) assures me, "is but for a moment." But you, it seems, are to suffer with a weak and greatly afflicted frame; and at such a time one should not be disturbed, even by comments on malignity and nonsense. On sickness

Digitized by Google

and pain, however, I can also speak from experience. I find God has something to teach his people quite distinct from any thing that they can learn from books or preachers,—something more interior and sanctifying.—"*Behold, I will allure her into the wilderness,*" and speak FRIENDLY TO HER HEART (as the margin reads). I shall not attempt to open this passage to *you*. I need not. I trust we both know the peculiar kind of instruction conveyed in this path; and which can be learned in no other. A stubborn dog like myself, and persons of the finest feelings and tenderest sensibilities like you, must each be led by "a way which the vulture's eye hath not seen," and which I would as soon undertake to explain to the wise men of this world, as I would to an oyster. 'This fellow,' one of them would say, 'is stark staring, and he would persuade Hannah More that she is as mad as himself;' to which I should probably reply, 'Pray Sir, what news to-day—is the definitive treaty likely to be signed soon?'

But 'procul este profani;' we know we speak but words of truth and soberness when we assert, that

> 'By glimmering hopes and gloomy fears,
> We trace the sacred road;
> Through dismal deeps and dangerous snares,
> We make our way to God.'

Nevertheless, I fully agree with you that these people are to be spoken to in their order, and have enclosed you a little attempt I have just made: perhaps 'Memoirs' are as good a vehicle of such instruction, as we can adopt in a superficial age.

Digitized by Google

Now, my dear Madam, I have one request to make, and that is, that you would *write no answer to this letter*. I hope I need not say that hearing of you, and especially *from* you, is at all times very gratifying to me, but I am deeply persuaded that your present state should lead your real friends to forbid such gratifications.

With my best wishes for your recovery, and kindest regards to Miss Patty and the ladies,

I remain, most truly and affectionately your's,

R. CECIL.

From Her Royal Highness the late Duchess of Gloucester to Mrs. Martha More.

Gloucester House, 1801.

DEAR MADAM,

The Bishop of London told me yesterday that Mrs. H. More was very unwell. Her life is of too much consequence to the world not to create serious alarm to her friends when she is indisposed—but I very much fear that she is at present much more than indisposed. Will you, my dear Mrs. Martha, write me a few consolatory lines, for I am really very uneasy about her. My reverence for her unblemished character and exalted piety, has turned into respectful affection; and that she may be restored to us, is the anxious prayer of, dear Madam,

Your sincerely attached well-wisher, MARIA.

My Sophia is, you may be certain, as anxious as myself.

Digitized by Google

Extract from a letter from Mr. Knox.

Ireland, 1802.

Poor Mrs. More! I fear her habitually weak frame has been additionally racked by the trial of "cruel mocking" which those ruffians have brought upon her. I see another hostile attack about to be made by Edward Spencer of Wells, '*for the benefit of the Bath General Hospital*,' in which theatrical boast of charity, there seems to be beforehand in the mind of the champion either a suspicion of something needing atonement, or a very disgusting kind of levity,—the latter I should think, certainly—as the allusion to the play-bill still is obvious. Really this is vexatious,—that one of the most illustrious females that ever was in the world—one of the most indefatigable labourers in the husbandry of God—one of the most truly evangelical divines of this whole age, perhaps almost of any not apostolic age (for such a view of complete yet *unexceeding* Christianity I soberly think I have never met with elsewhere, except in the New Testament itself, as in her later writings)—that such a personage should have her tenderest feelings thus barbarously sported with, not merely in pamphlets, but even in annunciatory advertisements—(see Spencer's motto) and her pure and exalted views traduced and vilified by every acrimonious bigot—who has neither moral taste enough to discern her motives, nor common sense enough to decide upon facts: that all this should be, *perhaps the*

Digitized by Google

last scene in the life of Hannah More, is, I would say in some sense, a *national disgrace.* Public candour and gratitude should, in my mind, call forth such an interference of the humane, the virtuous, and the respectable, as would authoritatively put an extinguisher on this ever-reviving flame.

I could not write to Mrs. More, really not knowing what to say to her, but when you see her, I wish you to express to her my ever kind and grateful regards, and to assure her of the sincere interest I take in her happiness. I wish I could silence her adversaries.

ALEX. KNOX.

About this time she thus writes to one who entered much into her cares and sufferings, in the following terms:

Barley Wood, 1802.

In answer to your kind hint about my coming to town, I ought to tell you that I have long resolved not to come at all. Battered, hacked, scalped, tom-a-hawked as I have been for three years, and continue to be, brought out every month as an object of scorn and abhorrence, I seem to have nothing to do in the world. I have indeed many kind friends who anxiously press my coming, especially at Fulham, but I shall be better at home; for though it has pleased God to give me great resignation to this long-protracted trial, yet it is a still, passive submission, and I want active courage to leave my

Digitized by Google

retirement, and my round of quiet employments. I try to indulge neither resentment nor misanthropy. I pray for my enemies, who are very low and very wretched. I have learnt the true value of human opinion; and I have learnt much of the corruption, not of the world only, but of my own heart. I have gotten stronger faith in the truth of Scripture. I feel a general spirit of submission; and there are *times*, but not often, when I can even *rejoice* that I have been counted worthy to suffer in this cause. From long habit, it will seem odd, after never having once omitted going to London, for thirty years, to discontinue it, but I think I am *right*. I have in that long period been spoiled for ordinary society, but am not nice as I used to be, and there are always duties enough to do if one will but do them. I have, I fear, been too much addicted to choose the pleasantest. My remaining domestic duties threaten to be of a more trying kind; pray for me, both of you, that my faith fail not.

Yours, my dear friend,
Very affectionately,
H. More.

In a letter to Mr. Wilberforce, after alluding to a virulent pamphlet from the pen of Mr. Bere, she thus writes:—

'I hope I shall bear these deep schemes for the destruction of my usefulness, by this attack on my reputation, with humble patience; but alas this frail body is neither hero nor Christian. The school,

Digitized by Google

thank God, is going on with hearty concurrence. shall certainly not answer the book, should it accuse me of all the crimes committed since the murder of Abel; but some of my friends may think it their duty, and this may detain me here a little longer than I wish, for I long to get away. I am sadly worried with company, and I am worried with refusing as well as with seeing them.'

Mrs. More formed a right opinion of her friends, in expecting her justification at their hands. All the good part of society joined in the reprobation of the treatment she had been so long exposed to, and her enemies were signally overthrown and disgraced.

The excellent Bishop of Durham, (Dr. Barrington,) whose sentiments on this subject had been wickedly misrepresented, alludes in the following letter to the approaching triumph of truth and virtue.

Auckland Castle, Feb. 1802.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Though involved in all the pressure of business which a visitation occasions, yet I cannot defer for a single post, to thank you for your valuable inscription on my beloved brother, which will not be deemed by the best judges inferior to your other compositions of the same kind.

I perceive with real pain the impression which certain unfounded and infamous calumnies have produced on your mind. With whatever eagerness

Digitized by Google

they have been circulated to serve the worst of causes, yet rest assured they will obtain little or no credit with those whose opinion is worth having. Let me entreat you for your own sake,—for that of your most attached friends, among which I trust you will always number me,—and for that of the public, to treat them with the contempt which they deserve. Remember the vantage ground on which you stand, compared with your wretched antagonist. In a contest like that in which you are engaged, your character must and will have its weight, and truth will, ere long, prevail. Can a falsehood so gross as that which has been fabricated respecting my patronage of Mr. B. be believed? Can it be supposed, not only by those who know me, but by the world at large, that I should countenance the man who has vilified and traduced a person to whose talents, virtues, and merits, I have borne the most public testimony? Leave the issue to the recent declaration of the Somersetshire clergy in the neighbourhood of your schools, and all will be right. God bless you, my dear Madam, the post summons me to finish, and may he give you all that comfort of mind which the consciousness of having discharged your public and your private duties in so exemplary a manner must administer.

Believe me, with the truest esteem and affection,

Your sincere friend,

and faithful servant,

S. DUNELM.

Digitized by Google

A passage in a letter from Mr. Gisborne, dated in January 1802, bears upon the same subject very feelingly and characteristically.

'The recent pamphlets respecting yourself which you name, it may be needless to say that I have never read. Mrs. Kennicott, in a letter to Mrs. Gisborne or myself, employed some few lines in noticing one of them; and her account was in some respects satisfactory to me. When accusations attain a certain pitch of virulence and improbability, they secretly undermine themselves; and when they become flatly contradictory to anterior charges, one set must speedily give way, and neither is likely to survive long. I am very glad that one of your accusers has directed his subsequent attack against a person, in whose case no peculiar circumstances exist to check the legal course of self-defence, and the legal punishment of calumny. It is my earnest wish, my dear Madam, that you may be enabled to pass through all trials with placid cheerfulness. Our great master is never at a loss for instruments, nor will his work suffer, though he should permit one which he has long employed to be injured or broken. But I trust that he has still much service for you to perform.'

In addition to the testimony which was borne by the clergy of the part of the county which was the principal scene of Mrs. More's benevolent activity, and to which allusion was made in the letter of the Bishop of Durham, the churchwardens and overseers of the parishes which had experienced the benefit

Digitized by Google

of her zeal and industry, put forth a printed declaration with their signatures, of the decided proofs coming within their own knowledge of the happy results of her charitable labours.

Nor were these honourable endeavours unattended with the success they merited. The convictions of all who were not pre-engaged on one side of this controversy, or prejudiced against the cause of piety, were settled in favour of a person, who, for the promotion of the happiness of others, had sacrificed her own health, gratifications, and repose. Towards the middle of the year 1802, she may be said to have emerged out of the dense and tainted atmosphere in which her health had nearly yielded to its suffocating influence, into a region of quiet, where her honour and integrity found their proper element, and enjoyed their true elevation. To this state of things the following letters very pleasingly allude.

Part of a letter from Mrs. Martha More to her sister during her visit at Fulham Palace, will shew, that besides the highest of all supports, Mrs. H. More had the greatest earthly consolation and encouragement under this trial.

Mrs. Martha to one of her sisters.

Fulham Palace, King's birth-day.

We arrived here Thursday afternoon, and found Mrs. Kennicott, who has just been reading to us a sweet letter from Mrs. Barrington;—she says, 'So Hannah More has again been persecuted; but she will indeed receive our Saviour's blessing, "blessed

Digitized by Google

are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake."' The Right Reverends are all expected, and the half-hour bell is just ringing.[1] I had it this morning from one who heard Bishop Horsley himself express his surprise at any persons attending to a syllable of B——'s accusations, after seeing that a clergyman and magistrate took affidavits himself in his own cause. Our friends say the business will have a good ending, even in this world. Nothing can exceed, and few thing equal the behaviour of the Bishop and Mrs. Porteus. I cannot express to you the very marked attentions which are paid to Hannah from all ranks and descriptions of people: they say such a persecution of such a woman is unexampled. Sunday, as we were sitting at breakfast, an old lady was announced; many rose to greet her, but she hobbled through them all to Hannah, whom she fervently kissed; I presently found it was Lady Elgin.

From Bishop Tomline to Bishop Porteus.

June 7, 1802.

MY DEAR LORD,

The victory is indeed most complete, and gained exactly as one could have wished; we do rejoice in it most heartily, not merely for the sake of Mrs. More, but as really thinking it of importance to the cause of religion. Adieu.

Yours ever most affectionately,

G. LINCOLN.

[1] It was the custom of Bishop Porteus to receive at dinner the Archbishops and Bishops on the King's birth-day.

Digitized by Google

From the Bishop of Durham to Mrs. H. More.

Mongewell, June 24, 1802.

I cannot too speedily congratulate you, and your whole family, my dear Madam, on the turn which affairs have taken at Blagdon. Triumph you do not want on any other ground than the vindication of your own conduct, and the innocence of your vilified schoolmaster. You will more easily imagine than I describe, the pleasure which I feel at the relief which your mind experiences, and, as I trust, the consequent improvement of your health on this occasion. Mrs. Barrington charges me with her best wishes, and I am, my dear Madam, with the truest regard and esteem,

Your faithful servant,

S. DUNELM.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

MEMOIRS.

PART IV.

FROM A. D. 1802 TO A. D. 1828.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

MEMOIRS.

PART IV.

CHAPTER I.

A VARIETY of considerations had for some time been preparing the way for Mrs. More's determination to quit her little residence at Cowslip Green, which, though very pretty, was in many respects inconvenient. The purchase of a piece of ground was offered her at about a mile distant, in a singularly picturesque and healthy situation, combining every possible advantage for a dwelling. Having selected the most advantageous spot, she built a comfortable mansion upon this ground, which afforded ample scope for the exercise of her taste, and formed around it a delightful territory, planted and disposed with admirable skill and contrivance. The sisters soon became so attached to this place, called Barley Wood, and found it at once so cheerful and salubrious, that they soon afterwards parted with their house at Bath, and made this

Digitized by Google

their constant residence. Here Mrs. H. More hoped to enjoy that retirement and leisure for which she had long sighed; but her talents for society, and the literary and spiritual advantages derivable from her conversation, were too well appreciated to allow her propensity to be gratified. The world broke in upon her from every quarter, and as the greater part of her visitors resorted to her for improvement and advice, she felt it her duty to be free and accessible towards all who sought her society. The disposition of grounds, the embellishment of rural scenery, and even practical gardening, as far as her fragile frame could permit, were her favourite pursuits—pursuits which were exalted and refined by those high associations by which all that she put her hands to were invariably characterized.

All her doings, little and great, from this epoch of her life, in which her time and her talents were consecrated to the highest service, were stamped with a divine impress that sufficiently denoted to whom they belonged, and to what they were directed.

It is somewhat to be regretted that her celebrity occasioned such an unceasing influx of letters as to require the sacrifice of too large a portion of her time to the necessity, (for her courtesy and kindness made it a necessity,) of answering them. The world wanted her, and the world interrupted her—the world used and abused her—honoured her by its calumnies, and humbled her by its caresses—attempted to spoil, to affright and to allure her equally in vain; its virtues made her weep for its

Digitized by Google

vices, and its efforts to seduce her into conformity with its practices fixed her more firmly on the safe side of that barrier which separates between earthly and heavenly-mindedness, between the children of disobedience and the subjects of grace.

From Mrs. More to Lady Waldegrave.

Barley Wood, Ash Wednesday.

MY DEAR LADY WALDEGRAVE,

I have forborne writing for some days, yet I know not why I should forbear it any longer: for though I can say nothing to you that your own heart has not already anticipated, yet there is a melancholy satisfaction in mixing one's tears with those of a friend, and in sympathizing with the most pure and genuine sorrow which the afflicted heart can ever be called to feel.

The Duchess had the considerate goodness to write me the mournful intelligence immediately. She announced the sad tidings in one of the *best* letters I ever read, suggesting every motive of Christian consolation, under one of the severest and most trying dispensations of Providence. My surprize was equal to my sorrow, because I did not know that the lying-in had taken place. Even now I can hardly persuade myself of the mournful reality. So healthy! so happy! so young! so prosperous! so lovely! so beloved! Oh, my dear Lady Waldegrave, I do not pretend to reconcile you to your trial by under-valuing the greatness of your loss: it

Digitized by Google

is a loss which this world cannot repair—a loss which nothing short of the deep and everlasting consolations of religion can, I should think, enable the sufferer to sustain. Happily those consolations are neither few nor small; happily also, I am able to say you possess them. I have always hoped and believed, that you were one of the favoured children of your heavenly Father, by the many trials to which you have been called. This recent sorrow only strengthens my opinion. He does not willingly afflict, but has always some gracious, though not obvious purpose. We must adore now; we shall understand hereafter. We shall then see laid open all the gracious purposes and merciful reasons of those afflictions which now seem so mysterious and inexplicable. These are the seasons which try our faith, and which, by calling it into exercise, prove it to be a really living, comforting, supporting principle. You have, my dear Lady Waldegrave, every consolation which the sad nature of the case admits. Your's is indeed *deep* sorrow, but it is *pure* sorrow, it is unmixed by any still more poignant feeling. Her course was short and blameless. She had not adopted the reigning corruptions; she had been taught to fear God, to renounce her own merits, and to trust in those of her Redeemer. You have the blessed reflection of having contributed by the principles you gave her, to her present, I doubt not, inconceivable happiness. Think how insupportable your present situation would have been, if you had to reproach yourself with a contrary conduct.

Digitized by Google

Poor Mr. Micklethwait! he is early called to suffer! May his sufferings be blessed to him. I do not know whether this fatal infant, for which he has paid so dear a price, is spared to him. If it be, I trust he will find great comfort hereafter, in educating it in those religious principles which alone can give present peace or final happiness.

You have both of you my earnest prayers, that that Almighty Being who has thus severely tried, may graciously support you. I am, my dear Lady Waldegrave, with true sympathy,

Your faithful,

H. More.

From Dr. Magee, (afterwards Archbishop of Dublin,) to Mrs. H. More.

Trinity College, Dublin, Nov. 12, 1802.

Madam,

In offering to your acceptance the volume with which this is accompanied, I but pay that tribute of respect, which every member of Christian Society owes to the information, the talents, the piety, and the zeal, which have so eminently distinguished your exertions in support of Christian belief and Christian morals.

Embarked in defence of the same cause, and combatting (though with far inferior force,) the same enemies, I feel that sort of tie which binds together in sentiment, those who range under a common banner, in opposition to a common danger.

Digitized by Google

Intimately acquainted also with those excellent productions, by which you have contributed so essentially to the improvement of the present times, I cannot persuade myself to view their author as a person totally unknown to me. Under these impressions, I have the less embarrassment in presenting myself to your notice, and in requesting you to accept a work, whose object at least will insure your favourable attention. And in doing so, I entertain the less apprehension of appearing obtrusive, when I am enabled to mention the name of my much esteemed friend and relative, Doctor Percival of Manchester, and to state that it has not been without his approbation that I have taken this liberty.

I have the honour to be, Madam, with the most unfeigned sentiments of respect and esteem,

Your most obedient humble servant,

H. MAGEE.

From Mrs. H. More to Mrs. T——.

Barley Wood, 1802.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have lately heard with much concern, repeated accounts of the poor state of your health. The long continuance of your indisposition makes it become serious—but without falling into the false, flattering way of those who soothe their sick friends by unfounded hopes of better days—I have really and truly the most sanguine expectation that by the divine blessing, a genial spring will completely restore

Digitized by Google

you; especially as you do not, and I thank God for it, seem to have those obstinate symptoms which will not yield to change of seasons. I should have answered your kind letter sooner, but have been myself confined with a troublesome cold and pain in my throat (a common symptom, it seems). I held up wonderfully while I confined myself to my double hose, and, wrapped up in a bale of cloth, defied almost any weather; but by way of experiment I would *walk* to see a neighbour, and after sitting by her large fire in my wrappings, on coming out the cold air struck me. I tell you this for your edification, that you may avoid a like error when you are able to get out. I am much better again.

And now to that which is the immediate object of this letter, and which is the concurrent wish of the whole family, as well as of myself. As I certainly owe the great improvement in my own health, under providence, to my present habitation, though perhaps *partly* to my habits of life, so different to what they have been all preceding winters, it is our earnest wish that as soon as the spring is fairly set in, and your strength a little recovered, you would pack yourself up in your post-chaise, and travel hither by slow journies. If Mr. T—— cannot (as I presume is the case) accompany you, you may bring M—— to amuse you, and your maid to take care of you on the road: a fortnight, I dare say, would set you up, and at Easter holidays Mr. T—— might come and fetch you home. It is the driest house in the country. You will have a south room, which even now in a snowy day is very warm, and which, I am

Digitized by Google

sorry to say, in summer is intolerably hot. The glare of light I am studying to abate, but heat and light are no such great calamities in February. You will have a fine airy hill to walk upon, with many a seat on which to rest, and on which you will twice a day be visited by a fresh sea-breeze. It is but a moderate journey, and it is not cold like your northern pilgrimages. You shall follow your own devices, and do as you please.

I have not given you a very brilliant account of the scenes I wish you to visit. If it pleases God, however, it may be brightened by the arrival of that spring which is to cure you. Our exterior is not much brighter. The fields look as brown as gravel walks, and the evergreens are quite withered by the frost, but to-day we have some rain, and if it continues we shall soon beautify.

I have fagged hard at good old Bishop Reynolds, a fat folio of near 1200 pages, which I have almost got through. Such solid Christianity! and such deep views of sinful man! And as to tediousness, I rather like it. I never can pick up any sustenance out of your short scanty books. As to new books, I know nothing, for I am not in the way here of borrowing or hiring, and I cannot afford to buy, because I have spent all my money on trees. Of books, however, it may in general be said, that 'the old are better.'

My old friend Lady Aylesbury is gone. Cadell, with whom I set out twenty-eight years ago in literary connexion, is gone! He, very healthy, taken—I, very sickly, spared! Owen Cambridge,

Digitized by Google

Bennett, Langton, all lately dead: besides numbers of less note, but younger and more promising, who have been dropping on the right hand and on the left. Yet, how hard it is to bring the mind seriously, earnestly, and practically to prepare for one's own call. When disappointments, sufferings, and trials drive one off from one refuge, the vain and deceitful heart snatches at another. There are so many *shades* of worldliness, that it is easy to have renounced the ball, and the play, and ambition, and extravagance, and dissipation, without having made much, if any real advance towards God; and it is easy to wish for heaven, and yet very hard to get a heavenly mind.

Mrs. Kennicott is very poorly, she has had so bad a cough as to have consulted Dr. Heberden. She has been at Acton, but I believe is now gone into Oxfordshire.

Your's, my dear friend,
Very affectionately,
H. More.

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

Barley Wood, 1802.

My dear Sir,

I was so much better for a day or two, that I had hoped every day to be able to write to you on the next, but I have had many relapses, and am still very poorly. The fever has in a good measure subsided, but has left something of the old complaint; and the bad nights I get keep me back. I

Digitized by Google

was promised to be quite well when I got to this elevated situation, but have been confined to my bed or room ever since I came to it. It puts me in mind of the old remark, that the first spot of earth of which Abraham took possession in the land of promise, was a *grave!* It is a salutary reflection. It is a little trying to me to know that you and Mrs. W. are so near, and not to be able to see you. I hope the waters strengthen and do you good, but so short a course I fear can do but little towards winding you up for a winter's labour. Blessed be God, the most painful parts of that labour will be mitigated by the restoration of peace and plenty! How utterly undeserving are we of such blessings! "Not for any works of righteousness which we have done," &c. I agree with you in deploring the dark prospect as to religion. It is as connected with the reigning temper and spirit of the times that I chiefly lament the Blagdon business. Alas! it is not me individually; I am only a petty victim. Could such a man as B——, with principles equally hostile to the church and state, be supported by men professing themselves warm friends to both, if they were not judicially blinded, and if a general hostility to serious religion were not a common rallying point to two descriptions of men opposite enough in all other respects? As to myself, I bless God, that though broken down in nerves and health, my mind is in general quiet and resigned. "It is enough for the servant if he be as his Lord." I resolve not to defend myself, let them bring what charges they will. If it please God to put an end to my little

Digitized by Google

(how little!) usefulness, I hope to be enabled to submit to his will, not only to submit because I cannot help it, but to acquiesce in it, because it is holy, just, and good. B——'s threats of a pamphlet were suspended by a fit of the gout, but Shaw was at work with him, and he had emissaries in all the villages, who were sent to pick up any stories they could against me; his object being to destroy my remaining schools. I had hoped to mollify him by silence; far from it; he has ventured ten times greater lengths from the certainty of not being contradicted.

My love to dear Mrs. W. and tell her to give all the babes a kiss for me. God bless you, my dear friend; pray always for,

Your very faithful,
H. More.

From Mrs. Boscawen to Mrs. H. More.

1803.

Among the kind notices which this good season has bestowed upon an old retired friend, none have afforded me satisfaction and real comfort equal to that of my very very dear, most valued, most esteemed Mrs. More's giving me such a charming account of her situation and health, as I durst not have figured to myself in all the times I have thought of her, which, believe me, have been frequently: that I never tell her so, has been not only from the fear of troubling her, but also because "the grasshopper is a burden!" My

Digitized by Google

great age remained light upon me till I lost my staff, my dear invaluable daughter; since that deep affliction I am sunk—not sick; and as I prefer solitude, it is a great blessing that I still preserve my eyes, and am now writing without spectacles; I praise God! You may believe I did not come to London for company, of which I have unavoidably too much: but my good son was come, and had too recently tasted of the gout, for me to venture to attract him to Rosedale.

What an excellent remedy has your wisdom found for all the rigours of the winter, which used too constantly to confine you to your bed. And you are on horseback, charming! But yet, my dear friend, I have thought of you much these last three days. Your house stands very high, and this raving wind at north-east, does it not visit your tender frame too roughly?

Your neighbours visit you, my dear Madam, but I hope you do not return their visits. *Car on n'est maitre que chez soi*, and you have your own corner at home, besides that our free-born weather, (vide Soame Jenyns) changes so suddenly that you may have snow to go home in, and you have no sedan chairs as we have at Richmond. I have left off going to any parties for these two years, and in London I never go out of an evening but to dear Lady Cremorne's; there meeting Mrs. Carter, I was tempted to treat them with your delightful letter, and they were extremely thankful for the sincere pleasure it afforded them. Present my best compliments to all the sisters; some perhaps love Bath;

Digitized by Google

but they love your health better. No wonder! You do not expect me to name your enemies: they have long since been clothed with shame; your friends are numerous, and most sincere; but who shall count the number of those to whom you have been benefactress, teacher, guide! I am sure I must not begin this endless subject, but will bid you adieu, still desiring your prayers. Can I forget you? Here is your picture, and here are my shelves covered with my dearest Mrs. H. More, and who will ever esteem me as her

truly affectionate, faithful, and
obliged Friend,
F. B.

From Bishop Porteus to Mrs. H. More.

London, Feb. 8, 1803.

MY DEAR MRS. MORE,

You know so well in what a bottomless gulph of business I am always plunged the moment I remove to my winter quarters, that you will not be much surprised at my long silence of near two months, on which I look back with shame. I have nothing to plead in my excuse but the utter impossibility of finding time for writing. In addition to all the other occupations that crowd upon me immediately after my arrival here, I have been obliged to do a great deal of business for the Archbishop, who has been confined by a severe cold; and have been also called upon to correct a fifth edition of my Lectures, and

Digitized by Google

another of my sermons. I now begin to emerge a little from this unfathomable abyss; and the first use I make of the day-light which now breaks in upon me, is to set pen to paper, and inquire after you and your sister's health.

Lord Whitworth and the Duchess of Dorset are setting a very good example at Paris, by the regard they pay to the due observance of Sunday. They have divine service at their house constantly on that day, and it is well performed. Lord Whitworth and the Duchess went out from this country with the best resolutions to show all due respect and reverence to religion, to give it dignity and importance in the eyes of the Parisians, and to convince them that there is one great nation in the world that thinks there is something in it. With these views Lord Whitworth declined going to a great review on Sunday, (which was supposed to be intended principally as a compliment to him,) because it interfered with the time of divine service at his own house; and the Duchess of Dorset refused an invitation to a grand assembly given by a Russian princess on a Sunday evening. The princess was very much astonished at this refusal, and asked Lord Whitworth the reason of it; he said the Duchess objected to the day. 'Ah!' says the princess with great simplicity, 'N'est ce pas que Madame la Duchesse appartient à cette Sécte, qu'on appelle en Angleterre les *Méthodistes?*' You see, therefore, that you are in excellent company, and I think you ought to write a letter of congratulation to the Duchess on her adoption into the

Digitized by Google

sisterhood. She was much diverted with the good princess's sagacious conjecture.

We have just skimmed over very hastily Sir George Staunton's history of Lord Macartney's Embassy to China: it is a most magnificent publication, a beautiful type, a fine paper, a broad margin, and a whole folio volume of fine engravings. The first volume is nothing more than a description of their voyage to China, and of the several places they touched at. The second relates wholly to China, and affords a great deal of amusement. There are many curious particulars relative to the face of the country, and the manners, customs, and language of its inhabitants. Amongst other things the Emperor's gardens appear really to justify the account given of them by Sir W. Chambers; and which Mason has ridiculed so much in his Heroic Epistle to that illustrious knight of the polar star. I read and admired your *Loyal Sailor*; but *Fantom* is the man for me: it is admirably well done, and will, I trust, produce the same effect on the middling and lower classes of the people that Erskine's speech probably will on the higher ranks of society. There are passages in that speech more eloquent and sublime than any thing I ever read in Demosthenes or Cicero, or any other writer ancient or modern. He dined with me about a month ago, at Fulham, when I urged him strongly to print his speech in a separate pamphlet, which he did soon after; but it sells in some shops for a shilling, in others for six-pence, which is a great deal too much. It should be reduced to two-pence, or a penny, in humble

Digitized by Google

imitation of your magnificent publications; and with these light paper wings he would be able like you, to *volitare per ora vivorum*, and to enlighten the whole kingdom.

I have lately printed the new edition I mentioned to you of Archbishop Secker's Life, with a short preface and a few notes; and if it had been worth such a long journey, would have sent it upon its travels to Cowslip Green. You shall have it if you wish it, but I fancy you will wait without much impatience, till we meet in London or at Fulham.

You see I have written on two half sheets of paper, which is now the high mode, and I suppose you have philosophy enough to know that two halves make a whole. Adieu. Mrs. Porteus sends her best affections to you. Take care of your health, and think sometimes on the solitary Anchorites of the happy vale,

Ever yours,

B. LONDON.

From the same to the same.

1803.

It was at Exeter that the idea first suggested itself to us of going to Weymouth, which till then had scarcely ever entered into our thoughts; but on talking it over, we agreed, that being within sixty miles of it (a mere trifle to such travellers as we) it was highly proper that I should pay my duty to the king, especially under his then circumstances

Digitized by Google

with respect to his eyes; they were, however, then growing better, and the cataract dispersed, so that there was no necessity for any operation. In other respects he looked well, and those about him said that he was better than he had been for sixteen years before.

You must have been surprised at my preaching there, and so was I too; I had not the smallest expectation or intention of doing so; for I got there late on Saturday, and concluded that the preacher had been fixed upon long before; which in fact was the case; but I had not been there two hours before I received the king's command, through the bishop of Bristol, (who was there) to preach the next morning. The place itself presents one of the gayest and most cheerful scenes I ever saw; the view of the bay, which is uncommonly fine, the shipping, the esplanade, the number of fine folks, fine horses, and fine carriages, continually passing and repassing, with an encampment of 10,000 men on the adjacent hills, form altogether a very striking and splendid spectacle. Add to all this, the king's yacht, which we saw; and which is, I suppose, the richest, most beautiful, and most highly-finished vessel in the world.

It is not a little flattering to me to find that I shall be immortalized by forming a new era in the annals of Barley Wood. It is much more gratifying to me than to have been recorded in those of the empire of France; or the more respectable one of Hayti. I rejoice to hear of the flourishing state of *my* arbutus, and that *your* hill has already

Digitized by Google

changed its complexion; it is nothing more than what the poet foretold—

> Another age shall see the golden year
> *Embrown the slopes* and nod on the parterre.

Your's ever,

B. LONDON.

Mrs. H. More renewed again during the progress of this year, her secret controversy with her own heart, and her solemn pledges of service in the work of edification and practical piety. Her diary of this year presents to us the mirror of a mind gathering strength daily from its increasing conviction of its natural weakness, and from the succours of grace conceded to prayer and self-abasing confession before the throne of grace.

Jan. 1, 1803.—Since I have been in some measure drawn off from the pursuits of the world, and have laboured, though in a most imperfect manner, to assist others in the knowledge of the truth—my life being active and my health bad, I find I have neglected my writing; but being now, through the will of God, brought to a life of more leisure and retirement, I resolve through grace, to resume it. And do thou, O Lord, grant that I may be more fixed in my thoughts, more frequent in self-examination, more heedful of the emotions of my own mind, more mindful of death from thus marking the progress to it. O Lord, I resolve to begin this year with a solemn dedication of myself to thee:

Digitized by Google

Thine I am; I am not my own; I am bought with a price. Let the time past suffice for me to have lived to the world—let me henceforward live to Him who loved me and gave himself for me. Lord, do thou sanctify to me my long and heavy trials. Let them not be removed till they have answered those ends which they were sent to accomplish.

I have this day had an awful admonition—heard of the death of Mr. Cadell, my bookseller for twenty-eight years; only a few years older than myself! born in the same village! In many respects we were alike prosperous, and went on with great amity in all our literary concerns. He abounded in the wisdom of this world, and his counsels to me were profitable. He was a useful man to literature. His friends Gibbon, Hume, Robertson—where are they?

Jan. 2.—Saw Spencer's profits of his book against me advertised in a list of subscriptions to the Bath hospital. Though I could not but see in this the most studied insult of the governors; yet I bless God I was not very deeply hurt at it. I was more hurt for Dr. R——, who in the same list carried one hundred and nine pounds to the charity; yet the governors received the poor sum of £10. from his and my calumniator. 'Put not this money into the treasury, for it is the price of many reputations.'

Jan. 3.—Lord, let me see more and more the reason of this late visitation,—yet I *do* see it. "I said, in my prosperity, I shall never be moved." I set too much store by human opinion, though I did not then know it. May these trials lead me to

Digitized by Google

look to Him, who, "when he was reviled, reviled not again—who endured the contradiction of sinners against himself."

Jan. 5.—I fear I am become more intent on reading scripture and cultivating retirement, than willing to advance others. I have hitherto erred on the other side; the danger now is, lest the slanders I have met with should drive me to too much caution and silence.

Jan. 7.—Various trials acting on a nervous frame and keenly feeling temper have disturbed my peace and health; I fear to the discredit of religion. Blessed be God my mind is not only placable, but is become serene. Instead of being disturbed by every petty event, I now endeavour not to think very much of any thing which is to end when this life ends.

Jan. 8.—Have been frequent in prayer for poor Mr. —— who is supposed to be dying; Lord, lay not to his charge, his offences against me. I forgive him as I hope to be forgiven.

Sunday, Jan. 9.—Formerly I was glad when they said unto me, "Let us go up unto the house of our God." Now I endeavour to submit cheerfully to be detained by sickness from church; yet it is a great hindrance to spiritual improvement, and I ascribe partly to this, that I have scarcely ever known any one person who has lived long abroad, retain much serious piety. Lord, I thank thee that my lot was cast in a land of light and knowledge, where the name of Christ is publicly professed, and Christianity preached in its purity. I bless thee

Digitized by Google

for thy day, thy word, thy Spirit. Lord, grant that my advantages may not one day appear against me; and that while strangers are called from the north and the south, from the east and the west, *I*, with all my means, may not be shut out of thy kingdom.

January 10.—Heard to-day of fresh persecution; new attacks from the old quarter, after frequent promises of silence. Lord, grant that I may bear this with a holy resignation to thy will. If reputation be the sacrifice thou requirest, thy will be done. I try daily to look less to human applause, and more to his favour, which is eternal life. Grant that I may not be content with *saying* this, do thou enable me to *do* it.

January 12.—Finished reading 'Halyburton's Life.' It is so ill-written, so full of Scottish idioms and vulgarisms, and so uncouth, that together with the gloomy state of his mind, it was a heavy labour to get through the first half; but the second made rich amends, it exhibits the most consolatory view of a soul having struggled with and conquered habitual sin; all ending in such a vigorous unshaken faith, and such a triumphant death-bed, as must animate the coldest heart, and leave the most cheering impression of the truth of Christianity. It would be well worth while to abridge, polish, and re-print this ill-written but striking testimony to the truth of religion.

January 13.—I was struck at hearing read one of my own stories,—'Tis all for the best!' meant as an answer to Voltaire's ridicule of Optimism.

Digitized by Google

The story goes strongly to the vindication of every dispensation of Providence, and inculcates unqualified submission in the warmest terms. I blushed to think that I had not acted up to my own views—"Thou that teachest another, teachest not thou thyself?"

Saturday, January 15.—Petty worldly turmoils ruffle the temper and take off from spiritual-mindedness. Against these I resolve to be more on my guard. Captain and Mrs. —— left us. While they were here we kept up a constant system of useful reading: nothing so good for hindering family talk from degenerating into mean useless trifling.

January 19.—A delightful letter from my dear ancient friend, Mrs. Boscawen, at 84, her praise of me too exalted, but kindly meant to support me under my strange attack;—she desires my prayers—how many do this, who little know how much more I need their's, and what a poor erring, sinful creature I am.

January 20.—I try to adopt into practice this remark: If I get repentance by affliction, it is not so much a trouble, as an advantageous traffic; it is a voyage which has pain in the way, but treasure in the end. No affliction can hurt him that is penitent and believing; if we escape, it will make us more thankful; if not, it will bring us nearer to God.

January 24.—Seeing that evils which I feared have been graciously withheld, and mercies which I despaired of have been granted, I would learn to trust God more, to commit myself to Him, to

Digitized by Google

throw aside all anxiety, and neither to fear remote evils, nor to look for distant good.

January 25.—With sorrow I find, that though it has pleased God by various trials, both in my health and fame, to wean me from what is called the world; and I have, through grace, obtained a considerable deadness to honours, pleasure, and human applause, yet I have been grieved to find the same spirit still at work on nearer occasions, and in the daily petty affairs of life. I am discomposed by trifles which I despise, and feel inequalities of temper at trifling faults in others; am impatient at their follies, weaknesses, imprudences; forgetting how often I myself offend, not only against them, but against infinite mercy, and inexhaustible patience. Blessed be God for Jesus Christ!

January 26.—Altered my will. I have tried to make it conscientiously. Made it a point to leave a legacy to the Bath Hospital, as a mark of my forgiveness to those governors who received from Spenser the wages of iniquity, with a view to inflict public disgrace on me. Lord, lay not this sin to their charge.

January 27.—I am thankful to say, that my thoughts in the night, in which my waking hours are many, are for the most part on serious subjects; but I grieve to find, that though my reins chasten me in the night-season, yet when the light of day restores cheerfulness and gaiety, and objects are alive about me, I cannot get back altogether to that spirituality which the night encouraged.

January 28.—I find it hard, nay impossible, to

Digitized by Google

acquit myself during the day, of the promises and resolutions made in the night-season; this furnishes fresh, constant reasons for flying "to the fountain open for sin and uncleanness;" it serves to keep the heart humble, by shewing its constant need of pardon, mercy, and the pleading of the divine Intercessor.

February 2.—My birth-day! How little was my prospect this day twelvemonth, that I should live to see it. I would enumerate some of the mercies of the past year: Raised up from a long and dangerous sickness—from a broken state of nerves and spirits, restored to a serene and resigned frame of mind, able to thank God, not only for amended health and spirits, for the many comforts and alleviations of my long and heavy trial, but enabled to thank him for the trial itself: it has shewn me more of the world, more of its corruptions, more of my own heart, more of the instability of human opinion; and it has weaned me from many attachments which were too strong to be right. Among other mercies, I have been preserved from injury, when my horse twice fell under me. My schools are not only continued, but God has raised up a powerful protector in the new bishop. He has enabled me to meet, without resentment, those whom I knew to be my enemies. He has given me a new and delightful habitation, and continued to me many friends; "Bless the Lord, O my soul!" May I seriously renew my repentance for the sins of the past year, and enter upon a new course of holy obedience. I would also reckon it among my mer-

Digitized by Google

cies, that I have escaped the bustle and worldliness of a Bath winter, and have so much time at my disposal. Oh! that I could spend it to the glory of the great Giver.

February 3.—Finished Blatrie's Life of Julian, which has given me a far juster view of that apostate's character, than Ammianus, Warburton, or Gibbon; less partial than the one—less prejudiced than the others. Mrs. A. Addington lent it me to read, with a view to comparing his character with that of Buonaparte. Certain points of resemblance are very striking—their vanity, hypocrisy, and affectation. The author has proved what he undertook to prove, that he was not a *great*, but a *singular* man.

February 6.—In the night I had much comfortable intercourse with my Heavenly Father, and felt resigned to his will, whether it decreed that I should pass through honour or dishonour, evil report or good report, life or death;—but when the business of the day returns, my own heart, and the frivolous conversation of others sadly diminish these good impressions. Oh! for more permanent spirituality of mind!

February 10.—Poorly to-day in body, and inactive in mind; an indifferent, feverish night, and in the wakeful intervals not disposed to think seriously. Lord, enable me to glorify thee in my body and my soul—which are thine.

February 13.—Confined all the week by my cold. I fear I have not gone forward in the past week; have read Scripture, &c. as much, but with less

Digitized by Google

feeling, less attention;—found it very difficult to compose my thoughts, and to fix them with comfort upon serious subjects: even the night has been less favourable to pious meditation, than has lately been the case: it is, I am willing to hope, partly from nervous restlessness that I have found it difficult to keep down intruding unpleasant thoughts.

February 14.—I find it hard to keep up near views of eternity when alone, and the more hard as these subjects are banished from company. Oh Lord! take away the heart of stone, and give me a heart of flesh; tender, impressible to the good motions of grace.

February 17.—A sleepless night, but I thank God, no great pain. I did not indulge my gloomy thoughts: nor did lamenting recollections obtain power over my mind, but I was enabled to repeat larger passages of Scripture, and to pray.

February 18.—Another month has past over my head. I have to be thankful for its mercies. No calamity hath befallen, nor any evil overtaken me, but such as is common, and to be expected in a life frail, uncertain, and suffering. Oh for warmer aspirations after a life that shall have no sorrow and no end!

February 27.—I am grieved to find on this Sunday, that though I have leisure, I have not the right relish for serious objects. I find it impossible, alas! to confine my thoughts to any devout contemplations for any length of time. "Who shall deliver me from this body of death and sin?" I thank my God through Jesus Christ, that my mind kept up a

Digitized by Google

sense of devotion for a blessed interval on first awaking this morning.

March 2.—This day finished Paley's 'Natural Theology.' It is a very able work—evinces the author's acquaintance with anatomy, and almost all science. All these endowments are made subservient to the grand purpose for which the book is written. But the work is still deficient in some essential points.

March 8.—Heard of the death of Mr. John Stonehouse; how can I not feel for him as the son of my faithful and most attached friend, Sir James, my counsellor, physician, and divine; who first awakened me to some sense of serious things! The young man was brilliant, but unsteady. That God, who knows the creatures of his forming hand, knows what of their defects are to be imputed to bodily infirmity, or mental irritability. It is the consummation of his mercy, that he has reserved us all for his *own final* judgment by Christ Jesus; who cannot but be touched with the feeling of our infirmity; who was in all things like ourselves, sin only excepted.

March 12.—Poor Captain ——, has been spending some days with us. I think it has pleased God by the trial of his sickness to work a material change in his heart. There seems to be in him a growing delight in spiritual things, and a tenderness of conscience. I bless thee, Lord, that that exemplary servant of thine, his serjeant, was one of our first scholars at Cheddar, and that thou hast graciously preserved him in faith and virtue, in a

Digitized by Google

station so full of temptation. With thy grace a camp may become a sanctuary, and without it the holiest place may be converted into a scene of iniquity.

March 15.—Finished this day, for the second time, Bishop Horne's Paraphrase of the Psalms. A work of great edification, and of a sweet and devout spirit. I do not know any book that has greater unction and savour of piety. Only one thing surprises me, that this excellent man falls into the common error of mistaking baptism for regeneration. Surely it is confounding the outward and visible sign with the inward and spiritual grace.

March 24.—I feel in finishing my garden that I have too much anxiety to make it beautiful; that it occupies too much of my attention, and tends to give worldly thoughts a predominance in my mind. How imperfection mixes itself with all we do and are!—This innocent relaxation, which Providence seems kindly to have provided for me so seasonably in the time of my distress and depression, is in danger of becoming a snare, by fixing me too much to that world from which I am in other respects trying to free myself. May I ever remember, that whatever keeps the mind from God,—or that stops the heart short of heavenly things, however harmless in itself, becomes sinful by drawing the time and thoughts and affections from their proper and legitimate objects. I have, perhaps, too strong a passion for scenery and landscape gardening.

Sunday, March 27.—By the great favour and goodness of God, I have been this day enabled to go

Digitized by Google

to church. Adored be thy holy name, that I am again restored to this privilege. O may it be sanctified to me! May I lift up my heart in gratitude for every spiritual blessing; for Sabbaths, for ordinances, for ministers! May I be less unfruitful under these multiplied advantages! Every opportunity increases my responsibility. Let me awfully remember that it was to the *professors*, to the *instructed*, to those, who because they had the *means*, made sure of salvation, that the Lord said, "Depart from me, I never knew you." Better to have been a pagan, a blind ignorant idolater, than a disobedient Christian, or an unfruitful believer.

Good Friday.—May the awful transactions of this holy day sink deep into my heart, and may I resolve with more effect than I have hitherto done, to live henceforth to him who died for me. May all my reading and meditation this day respect that great event on which my own salvation, and that of the whole world depends. Lord Jesus, hasten thy great work, and grant that the knowledge of thee may cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea. Bring in the Gentiles, convert thine ancient people the Jews, and finally accomplish the number of thine elect.

April 13.—A fresh call to repentance and preparation, in the death of one of my oldest friends, Mr. L——. Our acquaintance began when I was eighteen; we were both then devoted to poetry, literature, and intellectual amusement; his was a singular character; about the middle of life he renounced worldly society and reading, yet persisted in a close application to business. He fell into the habits and

Digitized by Google

opinions of the mystics—was much given up to secret devotion, devout meditation, and a thoughtful intercourse with his Maker. I have no doubt of his sincerity—but he was a character rather to be admired than imitated. He left off at last all public worship. Taking no active part in society, he brought little glory to God, and was less useful to mankind than his talents, his virtues, and his fortune ought to have made him. He was, however, one of the most amiable, gentle, and self-denying of men, and with all his peculiarities, was, I doubt not, a sincere Christian *in his way*. May I be found watching, as I doubt not he was!

April 19.—On Sunday I was enabled to go twice to church, through the goodness of God. Shipham in the morning; the first time of my visiting the schools. I hope I was thankful for being restored to my poor children, and a very full and flourishing school, well informed in the Scriptures. We can only put Christianity into their *heads;* do thou, O Father of mercies! put it into their *hearts*, and sanctify our labours.

April 22.—Mr. Whalley passed a day or two with us. I am always edified by his highly devotional spirit. He seems more dead to the world, and to realize the invisible things of eternity more than almost any man I ever knew. We conversed much on serious subjects, and read largely in Bishop Reynolds. I have to lament that the impression of such reading and such conversation is so soon effaced. Last night having lost my feverish symptoms, I was enabled to keep up devout

Digitized by Google

thoughts and prayers during all my waking intervals. Oh! that I could carry them more into the intercourse of the world!

May 4.—Indisposition of body and mind has prevented my writing. Things the most trivial and contemptible, occupy, distract, and indispose the soul for its proper work. I fear I have gone back in religion this week. My waking nightly thoughts have been less voluntarily pious. I find with sorrow that I stand in need of continual calls and awakening; for when all goes on peacefully, I easily degenerate into sloth and deadness.

May 5.—One ill consequence I experience from my long trial is, that whereas I used to watch for all occasions for introducing useful subjects, I am now backward to do it, from the idea that all I say may be called enthusiasm. Alas! it is a difficult case; —I know not how to act—Lord! direct me by thy Spirit. The low tone, too, of common conversation is very unfavourable to a spirit of devotion. I seize, however, what time I can to be alone, and that is the time I most truly enjoy. I do not get weary of holy reading; but meditation and prayer too soon fail. Just finished Hayley's Life of Cowper. Cowper's letters are interesting, as they present to view the genuine, affectionate, benevolent heart of the incomparable author. I was disappointed to find so few of his religious letters printed. The biographer seems to forget or not to know that religion was the grand feature, the turning point in the character of Cowper. It was difficult to write his life truly, and yet tenderly. Hayley has very

Digitized by Google

judiciously sunk some circumstances which might have been misunderstood; and he has treated his insanity with great tenderness. The whole is written in a good temper, and much favour is shown to religious people. As to the composition of the life, by way of preface, it is in a bad taste, florid and incorrect. It is however, with all its faults, a pleasing work, but might have been made far more useful. The letters wind about the heart, and captivate the affections, by their natural feeling, truth, elegance, and simplicity.

June 18.—A long pause. P. and I. have been absent a month at Cheltenham to drink the waters. However I may be as to bodily improvement, I fear my soul has not prospered in health. With fewer impediments than I have almost ever had; fewer trials; more leisure for reading and meditation, I am not more spiritually-minded. I read with little improvement, I fear, though I read much. O Lord, do thou root the spirit of worldliness out of my heart. It flourishes there, because it finds a congenial soil.

July 8.—Have been looking at one of the answers to Overton. My very soul is sick of religious controversy. How I hate the little narrowing names of Arminian and Calvinist! Christianity is a broad basis. *Bible* Christianity is what I love; that does not insist on opinions indifferent in themselves;—a Christianity practical and pure, which teaches holiness, humility, repentance, and faith in Christ; and which after summing up all the evangelical graces, declares that the greatest of these is charity.

July 20.—I had hung my harp upon the willows,

Digitized by Google

never more to take it down, as I thought; but importunity on the one hand, and supineness on the part of others, have driven me to write a popular song on the dread of invasion. What a state of things must we be in, when the most immediate way of doing good that occurs, is, for *me* to *write* a song! I was driven to make it merrily loyal; had it been serious it would have been scouted.

July 29.—Heard to-day that my enemies had been undermining my character, among those of the highest rank. I am anew accused of disaffection to those whom my humble talents have heartily supported, and whom it is one great business of my life to support. Blessed be God! I heard this with little emotion. O how thankful am I, that I can now hear such charges with patience! May I more and more learn of Him who was meek and lowly; may I with humble reverence, reflect that even that divine and perfect Being was accused of sedition, and of stirring up the people.

September 30.—I find it easier to pray that others may be weaned from the world than to be weaned myself. I have spent nearly all this week in my garden; too much occupied by amusement without doors, and company within. I am now through the mercy of my God come to the conclusion of another month. Great have been my mercies—great my undeservings. I would especially be thankful for a letter from the Rev.——, acknowledging the good done in his parish by my tracts—and to his own soul by one in particular—that on bringing religion into the common business of life. May my heart

Digitized by Google

be filled with gratitude for that goodness which has vouchsafed to work by so worthless an instrument.

Sunday.—We were all at Wrington church, and at sacrament. This last is a blessing I have so rarely enjoyed the last two years, that I cannot be thankful enough for any such opportunity. O Lord, hear and confirm the vows I offered up to thee at thy table; strengthen my faith, animate my hope, influence my charity. I was not well; I hope that may partly account for the coldness of my heart. When shall I be dead unto sin and alive unto God?

October 4.—Mr. T—— came to Bath in a weak state of health. May God raise him up, not only for the sake of his family, but the world. May his beatification be deferred, that his example may be continued.

Saturday, Oct. 6.—While watching over the vineyards of others, "mine own vineyard have I not kept." Professing to have given up in a good measure the world, and to be careless of human opinion, was I not too much pleased at the high esteem professed for me by the Duke of —— to various persons. I hoped I had learnt to value praise and reputation only as an instrument of usefulness.

Tuesday night, October 9.—At home for reading and prayer; but a cold heart and dead affections. Lord! prepare every heart, and especially my own, to confess with deep contrition and self-abhorrence our great and numberless transgressions; and may we say in the view of our great military preparations, "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and

Digitized by Google

maketh flesh his arm, and departeth from the living God."

October 13.—What a miscellaneous world! What different scenes occupy successive days! Yesterday Patty and I dined at Clevedon, to meet the Duke of ——, though our hearts were fresh bleeding with the recent wound of Drewitt's death. I thought it right to go, as a desire had been expressed for my acquaintance, which, under any other circumstances than those of my late trials, I should have thought of no importance. But neither the compliments, nor the splendours of the day, could make me forget my dear departed friend. We staid all night.

Friday 14.—My beloved friend, Mr. Wilberforce, and his family, came to pass a few days. I bless God that we were permitted to meet once more in this tempestuous world, in tolerable peace and comfort. I hope to profit by this fresh view of this excellent man's faith and holiness; his superiority to worldly temptation and worldly censure; his patience under provocations, and his lively gratitude for the common mercies of life.

Monday 17.—After breakfast the Wilberforces departed for Bath, and Patty and I for Cheddar, to pay the last sad duty to Drewitt. When I saw the poor widow, there were no tears, no murmurs, no complaints, it was the most heroic piety and exemplary fortitude. We attended the widow with her three young children, to take her last leave of the body, before it was carried out of the house. She leaned in a praying posture for a long time over the

Digitized by Google

coffin, embracing it—her little ones beside her—but not a groan escaped her, she was solemnly silent, but her heart was praying.

Mr. B—— preached a most interesting funeral sermon to above two thousand weeping auditors, and it fell to his hard lot to read the prayers, and to bury the friend of his heart. After sermon, the widow quietly walked out of her pew, took her babes by the hand, and went to the grave, over which she stood without indulging any emotion during the last sad ceremony. When all was over she walked with her children back to the house, to which the mournful procession all returned. The sight and sorrow of R——, the beloved friend of her husband, at length forced a flood of tears from this heroic mourner. If I am not the better for her example on this occasion, it will be among the number of my sins. Lord, sanctify to us all, and to me in particular, the solemnities of this day; and grant that the sight of youth, genius, and virtue consigned to the grave, may quicken my preparation for it. Such were the last honours paid to an obscure country curate, whose talents and acquirements would have adorned the highest station; but whose humility and piety eminently fitted him for that which he filled.

October 20.—Yesterday, the 19th, was the public fast. It appears to have been not only decently, but solemnly observed every where. O Lord, accept the prayers which thy sinful, but in many instances, I trust, thy repenting creatures, have offered up at the throne of thy grace: and grant that sorrow for sin

Digitized by Google

may be an abiding principle in the hearts of all those whose lips yesterday confessed it. Accept the prayers which were offered up for our king and country. Avert the stroke which we have most righteously deserved; and grant that, renouncing all dependance on ourselves and on an arm of flesh, we may place it solely on thy tender mercies in Christ Jesus. Unite the hearts of this nation, as the heart of one man, both in their allegiance to the king, and especially to thee the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords; and grant that whatever may be the event, we may be taught by it a deeper submission to thy will; and if in anger thou hast decreed that outward peace should be deferred, as a punishment for our sins, grant that we may have peace with Thee, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

28th.—Mrs. J—— came from London to pass three days here—the object of her visit most important—to gain hints and assistance towards a plan for educating young ladies. Patty and I have spoken largely and fully on the grand subjects of religion, and the infinite importance of Christian instruction. To teach a teacher, is laying out knowledge on the best interest; such seed may be re-productive of much fruit. God grant it! but the world she will have to deal with, will oppose those doctrines, or rather the practices they involve; for the world's hate is not so much directed against the *opinions* as the *conduct* of real Christians.

November 1st.—Another month is begun. I have been negligent, but God has been gracious. He has multiplied his mercies, but I have been cold and

Digitized by Google

dead under them. Even in writing this confession, I do it with an unfeeling, unbroken spirit. The country, though increasing in danger, has been preserved from invasion, and internal peace has been preserved. A public fast and humiliation looks like an acknowledgment of that God whom we have so much offended.

November 3.—We have had the comfort of two days of the company of our dear friend H. T. His mild, peaceful, subdued, holy, cheerful spirit, does honour to religion. May God spare him to a world not worthy of him. I forgot to record that on nearly the same day with Drewitt, B—— was called away to answer at the bar of God, for a life spent in opposition to the light of knowledge and education. He was one of the worst calumniators of poor D. Both called into eternity together! O how different the account they had to give of their respective talents.

Some petty vexations from a friend convinced me too sadly how much I am still in the power of trifles, and how little after all, the world is crucified to me, and I to the world. Oh, that I had the wings of a dove!

November 25.—Being able to do little or nothing to serve our country, it occurred to us as a sacrifice it would become us to make, that I should write and offer to give up Barley Wood to the commanding officers at Bristol, to be entirely at their disposal in the event of the French actually landing at Uphill, eight miles distant; or a partial use of our house in the meanwhile;—a kind letter of thanks

Digitized by Google

and friendly refusal for the present, but of acceptance in case of an invasion, has satisfied our minds that we did right in making the offer.

Sunday, 27th of November.—Too damp and wet for schools or church. Tried to improve the solitude thus afforded me. Read Baxter's Funeral Sermon, and some of the more serious passages of his life, and found them striking, and in some respects appropriate; but how sadly do I fall short of him, particularly where he speaks of his calumnious assailants. Fifty books were written against *him;* about twenty-three, I think, were written *for* and against *me;* besides three years monthly attack from the Anti-jacobin; but while Baxter blessed God that none of these things disturbed him, I have to lament that through my want of his faith and piety, they had nearly destroyed my life. In one thing only I had the advantage, I never once *replied* to my calumniators. In this one thing his trial was less than mine—that his calumniators did not hinder him in the service of God, by diminishing his estimation as a writer; whereas I believe that the false witness borne against me, has caused my works to be much less read and more condemned: but God can carry on his own work, though all such poor tools as I were broken.

November 29th.—I am much more sensible than heretofore of the breadth, and length, and depth of the radical sin of selfishness, and of the excellence and necessity of self-denial and public spirit and charity.

30th.—Lord! grant me more patience and watch-

Digitized by Google

fulness, and forgive my numberless sins, known and unknown, for the merits, and sacrifice, and intercession of my Saviour Jesus Christ.

I have been much humbled at reading an account of the death of good Mr. Key's son. What resignation to the divine will, what trust in Christ, what love of God *under* trials and *for* trials, at the early age of nineteen! At three times that age, how cold, how dead, how slack am I in preparation for that eternity, which is so rapidly advancing.

December.—Letter from Mr. Pearson declining Cheddar. This is a great grief. Lord, let it be a sanctified grief. Teach me a complete acquiescence in thy holy will; the work is in thine hand; to thee I would commit it. Deliver my soul from all sinful anxiety, and let me not be anxious about *thy* work, but my *own*. Oh, for more faith in the promises—more renunciation of my own wisdom—my own will—my own way.

Sunday, Dec. 11.—Patty is gone to take leave of Shipham. It grieves me, whose health is better than her's, thus to put the labouring oar on her—but the fear of being laid up for the winter, deters me. I have spent this Sabbath morning in my own room, with much peace of mind: I never do this voluntarily; public worship is God's ordinance, and ought never to be omitted, but on very strong grounds. Without public worship all private religion would soon decay.

December 26.—In the midst of my pain I have secretly been trying to reconcile friends whom trifles had set at variance. Oh, what an imper-

Digitized by Google

fect world it is! Good people quarrel for very nothings! For my own part I feel so much sinfulness in my own nature, that it makes me lenient to the faults of others. I say this now with more truth, from having felt sinful tempers rise in my mind to-day about trifles. Shall I not then forgive my fellow-sinner his hundred pence;—I who have a debt of a thousand talents to be forgiven? May we bear one another's burdens; and may I prepare for that period of pain, and weariness, and imbecility, which must be found in that old age which is approaching.

From Bishop Porteus to Mrs. H. More.

January, 1804.

It is, I believe, the opinion of those who seem to be best informed, that the French are now in a state of perfect preparation, and are only waiting for an opportunity most favourable to their designs; which may happen any day, or any hour in the week. We are, I hope, well prepared with every *human* means of defence. I wish we were equally secure of the Divine protection. The needless violations of the Lord's day, by reviewing, and parading, and presenting colours on that day, even during the time of divine service, make me tremble for the consequences. I have taken some pains to put a stop to those practices. They are, of late, become less frequent, and I have reason to hope that they will be gradually discontinued.

Digitized by Google

One great comfort to me during my winter retreat at this place, has been the uncommon mildness of the weather. My lawn is as green as an emerald; the aconites, the snow-drops, and polyanthuses, are all in full bloom; the lilacs, the honeysuckles, the rose-trees, are bursting into leaf; and while writing this letter, I have been regaled by as fine a thrush as I ever heard in the month of June. Poor things! how miserably are they all mistaken! they fancy that spring is come; but they may

> 'Soon experience to their cost,
> The horrors of a nipping frost.'

Among our Christmas enjoyments, one has been, the re-perusal of your works, verse and prose. I read them again with redoubled pleasure; and this renewal of my acquaintance with them has confirmed me in the opinion publicly expressed by me, which has never yet been either controverted or disproved, and which I am not likely to relinquish, but with my life.

You see, that although I write in duodecimo, yet I make amends by sending you two volumes. You may thank me for not sending you five, the usual quantity of such light summer reading, as I have now the honour of presenting to you.

Your's most sincerely,

B. LONDON.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. Boscawen to Mrs. H. More.[1]

1804.

Yes, my very excellent and dear friend, I must send one word sooner or later, in return for the kindest of letters, which was a *cordial* to me; that *one word* must express the truest gratitude for such a remembrance, the most constant affection, and the sincerest satisfaction in the news of your better health; so happily provided for by your own wisdom and activity in removing from the vale below, and planting yourself so delightfully on a hill, from whence you can discern your magnanimous defenders. I am much pleased, too, that you do not go to Bath, since Mrs. Martha is of the same mind. To the absent ladies, I desire to be kindly remembered. From you, my dear friend, I desire the continuance of your prayers. For oh! what it is to live so long! It is, you will answer, the will of him "in whom we live, and move, and have our being."

My health, since the last sad stroke, declines, but is better than it was. I do not go off this floor; my son comes to see me daily, and I have seen Lady Cremorne looking charmingly, and she is, I hope, well; Mrs. Carter less so within these few days; she was taken ill while dining with Mrs. Iremonger, but is better to-day. Adieu, my dear friend. Do not forget your very affectionate

F. B.

[1] We find inscribed on this letter, in Mrs. More's own hand-writing, 'The last letter I ever received from this excellent friend.'

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

Barley Wood, Sept. 10, 1804.

MY DEAR SIR,

The enclosed letter from my diocesan you will be so good as to return. I think you will agree with me that I could not have expected a more handsome or more unqualified answer to my letter. I shall, however, be cautious of availing myself of it. It may be more prudent to wait till next month, when he is to come to Wells, to see if his conduct corresponds with his professions, and to let him be a volunteer, if he is so disposed, in his good offices in that land of enemies. I feel thankful for such an honourable support and sanction; but after what has passed, I hardly depend on anybody.

It is from no kindness to *me* that the Anti-Jacobin has changed its note; but they are frightened for themselves, now that the world has found out what are the real principles, religious and political, of the party they have so zealously espoused: but even jacobins and infidels are to be upheld, if by doing so, Methodism, (or what they call so) may be crushed. Peace be with them! Their repentance comes too late to do me any good. I am sorry you did not read it, because you would have seen how I was in love with an *actor, and two officers*, &c.

I observe attentively all you say about the importance of lending a little spirit and vigour to the periodical you mention. But in order to give a

Digitized by Google

thing one must *have* it, and there is no affectation in my saying I feel as if I should never be able again to write what any body would read. Besides, the soil, naturally meagre, is exhausted, and must lie fallow before another crop can be hoped for. But foolish metaphor apart; my nerves are far from being sufficiently strung for me to write. I have acquired such a dislike to it, that I hesitate and procrastinate for days, when I have even a common letter to write. I used to defy mere pain and sickness, and found little difference when any thing was to be written, whether I was ill or well; but the late disorders of my body have introduced new disorders into my mind,—listlessness and inapplication, (two words of which before I hardly knew the meaning;) yet as to general health I have gained much ground lately. It would grieve me sadly if my want of power should produce in you a want of will to take it up. My inability should rather stimulate your zeal. I see how important it would be. I know what strength you gave to the first number by a striking Essay. It is certainly a valuable miscellany, written in an excellent temper—sensible, judicious, and in general, candid and moderate; but it wants a little essential salt, a little sprinkling of *manners* as well as *principles*. Good people will like it as it is; but we do not so much want books for good people, as books which will make bad ones better. Do write without once thinking of such a pigmy associate as I should be—a dwarf in my best estate, and now a dwarf crippled. Love to Mrs. W.

Your's ever, H. More.

Digitized by Google

Her diary for 1804, is the last of those interesting impressions of her mind found among her papers, in which her thoughts flow in a consecutive series; and which, while they indicate the progress of her self-searching piety, and its beautiful surrender to divine discipline, exhibits an instructive specimen of the great gain of godliness in the settled serenity and happy confidence in which it lands us at the last.

Sunday, Jan. 1. 1804.—I am now, through the great and undeserved mercy of my God, brought to the beginning of another Sunday and another year. "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits; who forgiveth all thy sins and pardoneth all thine iniquities." O Lord! give me grace on this day solemnly and seriously to repent of the sins of my whole life, and especially of the sins which the past year has added to the sins of my past life. And do thou touch my heart with a deep and lively sense of thy continued, renewed, and increased mercies. Enable me this day to pass over in review these particular mercies; among others, a considerable restoration of my health and spirits; personal and family comforts continued; family misfortunes averted; opportunities of doing some good—our schools continued; kindness of friends; ability to enjoy my sweet place; escape from the turbulent life of Bath; increased opportunities of reading and retirement. I have too, to be thankful, amidst grievous alarms and dangers, for many public blessings;

Digitized by Google

for an unusual degree of domestic peace and unanimity; for the cordiality with which all ranks have come forward in defence of the country; that a foreign invasion has been mercifully kept off, and that we have had time for preparation. So blind and ignorant are we, that perhaps even those very winds and tempests which have made us tremble for our safety, have helped to insure it. We know not, as to temporals, what we should ask for; let me therefore implore earthly blessings with entire submission to the divine will: in praying for spiritual mercies no reserve, no caution, no limitation is necessary. Lord, pour out the grace of thy Holy Spirit on me and mine, without measure; teach us to love *thee* with *all* our hearts, minds, souls, and strength, and to devote the remainder of our lives to thy service, and to the glory of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Jan. 7.—Intense pains in my head and face continue. Lord, give me more patience: "Shall a living man complain?" Oh! how much fewer are my sufferings than my sins; how much less do I suffer for my sins than my Saviour suffered for them!

Jan. 14.—Blessed be God for an interval of ease for two days. I call myself to account for my late deadness, and hardness, and worldliness; disturbed with petty cares, and my heart much alienated from prayer by those very sufferings which ought to have drawn my soul nearer to God. "Oh! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus

Digitized by Google

Christ." A visit from Mr. A——: he declares that the country is in a complete state of defence, and the foe hourly expected. Lord, strengthen our arms and prepare our hearts. Alas! what preparations are the great of my own sex making! Balls, routs, masquerades: such was the preparation Belshazzar made, when Cyrus burst the brazen gates, and Babylon was lost in a night. O Lord, awake this sinful, sleeping land. Death and eternity! impress these two awful words on all our hearts.

Mr. and Mrs. and Miss H—— came for a week; thus my solitary hours are abridged; we read together one or two sermons of Gisborne's every day, and a portion of general history in the evening. May I be rendered useful to these pleasing friends, by being enabled to make such remarks as may lead this young person to read common books with moral and religious advantage.

My greatest loss in giving up the society of my distant friends is that I have fewer to stimulate me to the love of God. Lord! let this deficiency lead me to look more to the fountain.

Long habits of vexation and disappointment, to which I am now inured, make ordinary trials light to me. Impatience has been one of my besetting evils; it is still too ready to break out, even on occasions too small to record; but it is less so than it was.

Some painful occurrences. May we pity the errors, weaknesses, failings, and evil tempers of each other. Teach us, O Lord, to cultivate a spirit of Christian charity, and to bear with each other,

Digitized by Google

especially as the days of age and imbecility advance.

Let me be thankful that I have a comfortable evidence of growth in grace. I have lately heard of new enemies, and of the malignity of old ones, with composure, and, I trust, with submission to the divine will. Oh! that I may be entirely delivered from the fear of man, and the desire of human praise!

I was tempted to a piece of levity, of which I have rarely been guilty; in writing a loyal paper I had approached too near to a parody on the Church Catechism. I am thankful that I felt my error, and altered the piece, even to its injury, to avoid giving offence to the serious, or any example of lightness to the vain.

My religious reading has been much abridged, but I have in general kept up my hour of reflection at the close of the day; a retirement I much enjoy and labour to secure. If religion has lost ground in my heart lately, a day or two of pain, through grace, may help to restore it. I had this morning in bed more comfortable intercourse with my Maker than of late.

Sunday, 15th.—Ill health detains me from church—have been awakened to-day to more than usual fervour in prayer, in which I have been lately so dead. God grant there may not be more servile fear, than filial love in it. O Lord, I have not loved thee as I ought, and therefore I have not served thee devotedly. I know not how much unbelief may be at the root of all this deadness. The Miss S——'s

Digitized by Google

here for some days—a painful breach healed—no misunderstanding ought to subsist for a day between Christian friends; life is too short—peace too precious—we must "bear one another's burdens," Christ bore *all* ours.

Lord! look upon Cheddar—suffer not the work begun there to fail.

Lord, I come to thee persuaded that all thy ways are perfect wisdom, and all thy dispensations perfect goodness.

Sunday, 22nd.—After a week of too much worldliness, my mind has somewhat recovered its tone in devout prayer in the night. I have also to-day prayed with more affection. I have endeavoured to check my own spirit, by placing death before my eyes, and carefully reading Doddridge's last chapter—the dying scene. While I read, the impression is strong, and my mind serious, but when the book is closed, the heart grows cold, and the world rushes in. Some worldly trials in the week have given me less vexation than usual, but that may be not because my resignation is greater, but my animal spirits better.

25th.—I bless God for the holy example my friend N—— is giving of the power of religion—under tedious, painful, and dangerous disease—she is divinely supported—her children and servants are grown serious through her means; divine grace has made her to be willing to die, and resign her numerous children into the hands of her heavenly parent.

Sunday, February 19th.—How uncertain are all

Digitized by Google

sublunary things! Just as the delay of the invasion was lulling the country into a false peace, it has pleased God to afflict us with an awful visitation—the sudden and alarming illness of the king. Into what new calamities may this sad event plunge this unthinking nation! Oh Lord! in mercy remember us. Avert, if thou seest fit, this heavy stroke. Though we have rebelled against thee, and our national iniquities cry aloud against us, yet do thou spare us, or do thou over-rule this event to his everlasting salvation, and for the public good; comfort and bless the royal sufferer, support and strengthen him under every trial, especially under the last great conflict. Sanctify it to his family, and grant that it may bring us all to a more serious temper; to a close personal apprehension of the vanity of life; and a constant preparation for another world.

February 27.—I have been hindered from writing, by an application to compose the address from Lloyd's committee for the Patriotic Fund; I thought it my duty to contribute to that good work, though they might have found another pen. Lord, let not a foolish vanity be the consequence of the compliments received on this occasion.

28*th.*—Our Bath house is sold. I am thankful for an event which fixes us to this place for the short remainder of life, without the turmoil, care, and expense of a divided dwelling and bustling town. Lord, grant that this may prove a blessing to us all, and draw us nearer to thee. Make us thankful that our own lot has fallen in so pleasant a place,—that we have a goodly heritage; but let us

Digitized by Google

not take up with so poor a portion as this life, or any thing in it.

March 7.—My diary is here interrupted, and may be so for a long time; the idea has been suggested to me, to write a pamphlet on the education of a certain royal personage. I am unequal to it, yet they tell me it is a duty to attempt it; I feel reluctant, but no irksomeness in the task should prevent me, if I dared hope I could do any good. Lord, if it be fit that I should undertake it, do thou strengthen me for the work; fill me with a holy boldness,—with prudence and wisdom; and if I really set about it, let thy blessing, without which all is nothing, attend it. Have been reading the lives of Pascal, Cranmer, Hall. Few things so profitable or so pleasant, as the lives of eminent and holy men: the last is not impressively written—does not enter into those domestic details so interesting in the lives of good men. Cranmer seems faithfully delineated by Gilpin, and is of all characters the most interesting to me; partly from a corresponding weakness: but a more religious use might have been made of it by Gilpin.

12*th*.—A visit at last from Mrs. ——, ardent, amiable, pious. I am humbled at her assuring me, that my writings have been the honoured instruments of bringing her to the knowledge of the truth, for, alas! how little power have they on my own heart and life!

Here her diary is suspended by the new call made upon her exertions, to which she has above alluded.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER II.

In 1805 she produced 'Hints towards forming the Character of a Young Princess.' It was written at the earnest request of a dignitary of the church. She undertook it with reluctance, as being in her own estimation wholly unequal to the task; and it was only from the consideration that the Princess[1] was at this time solely under the care of ladies, no preceptor having been yet appointed, that she suffered herself to be engaged in this delicate task. When she had nearly finished the work, the appointment of Dr. Fisher, Bishop of Exeter, (afterwards Bishop of Salisbury) to that important office, made her for a time resolve to desist from prosecuting the undertaking; as she thought it might be deemed at once intrusive and superfluous to interfere in a vocation which had now been authoritatively confided to a learned and able man. After some scruples, the mildness and urbanity of the Bishop's character determined her to proceed in the work.

[1] The late Princess Charlotte of Wales.

Digitized by Google

It was to be anonymous, and a profound secrecy was observed respecting it. But she conceived the design of meeting objections, by dedicating the book to the Right Reverend Preceptor himself. The work was kindly and politely received by him; and on her sending his lordship a copy, without any intimation from whence it came, a correspondence was naturally opened between them, in which the bishop addressed her as a gentleman. The internal evidence, however, as usual, soon betrayed the secret, and the discovery gave birth to an acquaintance and intercourse with the bishop of Exeter, which was equally agreeable to both the parties.

From Mrs. Kennicott to Mrs. H. More.

Fulham, 1805.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I delayed writing to you till I came hither, because I thought I should have something to say to you from our dear bishop: and now I find he is writing to you himself, so I must make out my letter 'from my own bat,' as the cricketters say. Perhaps, too, we may tell you the same things, but we shall not tell them in the same manner, so no matter. I received your last letter at Mongewell, and put your queries to that bishop, concerning the title to your intended publication. He approved of the title; he said he thought it modest and appropriate.

It is a mistake that I have been thought of for

Digitized by Google

the Princess's establishment—if I *could* be thought of. A plain question, such as Farmer Worthy would have put to himself, would determine the point. Am I fit for the situation? I understand there is to be a governess, a sub-governess, and an assistant-governess. I have not rank for the first, or qualification for the second, and I am too old for the third.

Lady Elgin brought the Princess to chapel here, yesterday; she is certainly a wonderful little creature. She has taken a great liking to the bishop, and always desires to walk alone with him. Yesterday she desired to repeat a hymn to him, and repeated one of your's. I have heard some things of her lately, which lead me to believe she has a thinking mind, uncommon for a child of her age. Just before I left Windsor, I had some conversation on the subject with Princess Elizabeth, and she gave opinions with regard to her education, so like some that you have given, that I could almost have thought she must have conversed with you on the topic.

Did I tell you of the Princess's soliloquy on reading the second chapter of St. Matthew? 'I think,' says she, 'Joseph ought not to have been afraid of returning into Judea, when God had told him by an angel that he might return; but I leave that to be settled by the Bishop of London and Lady Elgin.'

What curious and interesting information Lady Waldegrave's letter gives you; and in addition to it, the Bishop will tell you he has had accounts

Digitized by Google

of the beneficial effects of your writings in Nova Scotia.

Your's affectionately,
A. KENNICOTT.

From Mrs. H. More to Mrs. Kennicott.

Barley Wood, 1805.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I have been shamefully remiss in answering your letter, considering the sincere pleasure it always gives me to hear from you; and especially when I reflect in what a sad melancholy scene you are constantly engaged. I feel much for you, often talk of you, and think of you still oftener. I cannot plead illness for my silence, for though my general health has been very poorly, and I suffer a good deal, yet the complaint now not falling, blessed be God, on my nerves, does not much disqualify me. But we have been overdone with company all the summer. I have, however, completed my princess, though amidst interruptions very unfavourable to a work which requires close attention and long sittings. I think very moderately of it myself, and suppose the world will think still less favourably. I trust, however, that my intention is pure, though my hopes are low.

Lady Kingston, who was here on Saturday, gives a very good account of our dear Bishop and Mrs. Porteus, whom she met at Villa Maria. She is just returned from a visit to all the German courts. She brings a good report of the health and apparent

Digitized by Google

happiness of our Princess Royal. I rejoice with trembling, that our beloved King is going to Weymouth; I rejoice that he is well enough, but tremble at his putting himself in so bustling, and perhaps perilous a situation. How awful things look!

I had the honour of a visit from my diocesan about a month ago. He and Mrs. Beadon seemed much pleased with little Barley Wood. I also passed a day with them at the beautiful villa of my neighbour Whalley. My visit to Wells is deferred in order to give me an opportunity of meeting Lady Waldegrave there, who is soon expected, and I suppose she will come here also. Mrs. Bere has left this country.

It is a curious thing that no less than *four* of my assailants should have been tried in the court of King's Bench for libels, and found guilty. Thankful am I that it has not been by me, nor in my cause. I cannot sufficiently acknowledge that restraining grace, which has preserved me, not only from attacking others, but from defending myself, and that I was enabled to commit my cause to him who judgeth righteously.

Adieu, my dear friend, believe me ever,

Your's affectionately,

H. More.

Digitized by Google

From the Bishop of Exeter, to the Author of 'Hints to a Young Princess.'

Parliament Street, May, 3, 1805.

SIR,

A severe fit of the gout has prevented my taking earlier notice of the very handsome present I have received from the unknown author of *Hints for a young Princess.*

I shall now no longer delay returning you my best thanks, for the very high degree of pleasure and satisfaction the perusal of your very excellent performance has given me.

The world will soon, I am confident, be as anxious to know, as I am, to whom we are all indebted for so useful a work.

I am, Sir,
With great respect and esteem,
Your much obliged
and faithful Servant,
J. EXETER.

To the Author of 'Hints for a Princess.'

Parliament Street, May 20, 1805.

The Bishop of Exeter has the pleasure of informing the Author of *Hints for a young Princess,* that he has had the honour of presenting copies of that excellent work to the King and Queen, and to the Prince and Princess of Wales.

The Queen has read the work, and has declared her approbation of it to the Bishop of Exeter.

Digitized by Google

From the Bishop of Exeter to Mrs. H. More.

Parliament Street, May 24, 1805.

MADAM,

I take the earliest opportunity to thank you most sincerely, for the very obliging letter you favoured me with yesterday.

At the time I addressed my two notes to the author of the 'Hints,' I had a very strong inclination to have addressed them to the *authoress*.

No one who had read with attention Mrs. More's work, entitled, 'A view of the principles and conduct prevalent among Women of Rank,' could doubt to whom to ascribe the 'Hints.'

When I had the honour of seeing the Queen a few days since, her Majesty, after saying many things in commendation of the new work, asked me if I knew who the author of it was. I replied, that I certainly could not take upon me to say who the author was, but from strong internal evidence, I had great reason to believe that Mrs. Hannah More was the person to whom we were indebted for this excellent book.

I hope to be able to pay a visit at Fulham Palace some morning in the course of the next week, when I shall embrace with pleasure the opportunity of assuring you in person, how much I am,

Dear Madam,

Your obliged and faithful humble servant,

J. EXETER.

Digitized by Google

From the Bishop of Llandaff (Dr. Watson,) to the author of 'Hints to a Young Princess.'

Calgarth Park, May 30, 1805.

SIR,

In an age and country abounding with sensible and well written books on every subject, and especially on the subject of education, I have met with none which has afforded me more pleasure in the perusal than the 'Hints for a Young Princess.' What the writer has said of Johnson—that he never loses sight of religion,—is peculiarly applicable to himself or herself; it is this attention to the most important concern of human kind, which constitutes the best part of a book in which all is good.

You will accept my thanks for the obliging present.

I am, Sir,

Your faithful servant,

R. LLANDAFF.

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Knox.

Fulham Palace, June 3, 1805.

MY DEAR SIR,

I hope you were clever enough to make out, that when I wrote to you last, I had not received your kind letter, which only *could* account for my not answering any part of it. I have been continually hindered from writing by change of place, by indisposition, and chiefly by company; my old friends

Digitized by Google

being assembled about me, and leaving me little time to myself.

I ought to beg of you, in the first place, to dismiss from your mind any anxiety on the subject of the imprudent disclosure of my having written *the Princess*. I am almost sorry I ever mentioned it to you, as it gave your feeling mind so much pain. If I had known that Dr. Woodward still remained in the neighbourhood, I would have found him out, in order to have set his mind completely at rest; for I do not like the idea, that that amiable and worthy man should feel uncomfortable for a momentary indiscretion, especially as the event has been such, as to render it less important; for I must tell you, that to my great regret, the secret betrayed itself; and from internal evidence, the author was discovered as soon as the book was read. I declined the avowal, however, as long as it was possible; but the suspicion became so strong and so general, that it would have led not only to affectation, but deceit, to persevere in silence. A curious correspondence has passed between me and the Bishop of Exeter. His candour and politeness to the *anonymous* author, whom he naturally addressed by the appellation of 'Sir,' did him credit. He presented the work, at my request, to the king; also a copy to the queen; and to the Prince and the Princess of Wales. He let me know, that the queen alone had *then* found time to read it, that she was very warm in her commendations, and as anxious as himself to know the writer. As he so highly approved the book, I thought it handsome, when the

Digitized by Google

secret *could* be maintained no longer, to compliment him with the first avowal, and I am expecting a visit from him, in order to talk it over. I believe the work is in the hands of most persons of high rank in London, and it has had the good fortune to please. I almost question whether it will become so popular with persons of the second class, as they may fancy it is exclusively addressed to royalty.

Since I sent the three copies by Mr. Butterworth, I ordered another set, through him, to be sent for Mrs. L——. I sent it at that time through you, to guard against suspicion; but your tongue is now untied.

We were disturbed from our Kentish visit, by our worthy host being called to be first Lord of the Admiralty, by the title of Lord Barham. Patty and I often say, what a comfort it is to have a cabinet minister, who, we know, *prays* for the success of his measures; and whose professional knowledge, industry, and integrity cannot, I believe, be surpassed. We were amused with the terms he made before he would stir from his retirement; that he would not change his dress, give or accept of cabinet dinners, or attend levees or drawing-rooms; and they were glad to accept him on these uncourtly conditions.

We have been spending the last fortnight with my excellent friend the Bishop of London. He is going on well in the best sense, and has done himself great honour by the stand he has made against Sunday concerts. He has written an admirable letter, very strong and very pious, but temperate

Digitized by Google

and well-mannered, to all the great ladies concerned in this unchristian practice. The effect, I trust, will be such as could be wished; they have in general behaved well, and promised amendment. He is at present engaged in carrying a bill through Parliament for improving the incomes of curates, which will draw on him the blessings of the inferior clergy.

We have also spent a little time with the Clapham party, Lord Teignmouth, the Wilberforces and Thorntons. They all regret much that they saw nothing of you when you were in England. We have been disappointed at your not having sent any of those admirable papers you read to me, to the Christian Observer; a fault I hope you will soon repair—it will really assist them much.

On Wednesday we propose taking leave of our kind friends here, and setting our faces westward. I long to salute my household gods, and to return to privacy and quiet.

Do not forget to mention your health when you write; and believe me, with every sentiment of esteem,

My dear Sir,

Your very faithful and truly grateful,

H. More.

Digitized by Google

From the same to the same.

Barley Wood, 1805

MY DEAR SIR,

I know you have chivalry enough in you to allow *place aux dames*, I must therefore begin by desiring you to thank dear Mrs. L——, for her kind letter and cordial invitation, and to tell her that few things would afford me more real satisfaction than to see her at her own enchanted castle; but that I despair of ever being able to accomplish it. At least I have not energy to think of it at present, and there is this obstruction to my undertaking it at some remoter period, that I shall not be growing younger.

The pamphlet addressed to my excellent friend Lord Teignmouth, was not (at least so it is said) written by the *Bath Presbyter*. Abominable as I am told it is, both in argument and principle, it really disturbed a few violent, but weak persons. I know no more of it than can be picked up from reading the answer by *the Suburban Clergyman*, as he denominates himself. The author however proves to be Mr. Owen, Lecturer of Fulham, and author of the pleasant little volume called *The Fashionable World Displayed*. His defence of the Bible Society is replete with wit and humour, and must I think have made the popish party (for such they appear to me) ashamed of their absurdity, if indeed any thing can. *Your* pamphlet will, I doubt not, complete the triumph of that party, which

Digitized by Google

having truth, reason, and common sense on its side, has yet not a little to encounter from the folly and malignity of prejudiced persons.

I will not attempt to answer *some* of your observations on my having so much extolled the *doctrines* of the church, because I confess I do not quite understand what you mean. You, I believe, take for granted that I meant the *Articles*, about which, not being a clergyman, I really little concern myself; whereas, if I understand myself (which perhaps I do not always) I was thinking of the doctrines only as they are exhibited in the Liturgy, about which, I think, *we* have but one opinion. I was even so unwilling to dwell on the Articles, that it led me to omit part of what you had suggested, and if I do not mistake, there are not more than half a dozen lines which relate to them. I never talk or write of doctrines, as a party matter, thinking it makes our tempers sour and unprofitable. The doctrines peculiar to Calvinism I do not adopt, though I much reverence many good men who maintain them. These differences I conceive to be permitted for the exercise of mutual charity.

I should indeed have been glad to have had you at my elbow in correcting some of the numberless errors. And the misfortune is, that a large portion of them have travelled on to the second edition; which being called for before I had quite looked over even the first volume, I would not stop the press while I weeded the second. Indeed, to save time, both volumes were put into the press at once; I am sorry to say it was before I received your first

Digitized by Google

letter on the subject, so that I was not able to avail myself even of those corrections you were so good as to suggest. In London I had no time allowed me for the business of criticising myself.

I had several interviews with the Bishop of Exeter, and extremely satisfactory ones; nothing could exceed his candour, warmth, and frankness of communication. Not the slightest tincture of jealousy or littleness. I also passed one evening with Mr. Nott, the sub-preceptor; about whom, as he, after all *must* be the acting man, and efficient instructor, I was still more anxious than about the Bishop.

The Bishop being now gone to his diocese for three months, of course the whole care of the education devolves on Mr. Nott, who was so good as to describe to me his manner of communicating instruction to the Princess, with which I was much pleased. The Bishop appears to have a proper notion of managing her, and of 'casting down high imaginations.'

I am obliged to you for Mr, Jebb's letter: he writes admirably. Though if he were addressing me in private I should be thankful to have all my errors drawn up in battle array, yet I hope in public, he will be 'to my faults a little blind.' Indeed I wish I had given more time to their correction.

Adieu, my dear Sir; believe me with every sentiment of regard,

Your very faithful and greatly obliged friend,

H. More.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. H. More to Lady Waldegrave.

Battersea Rise, 1805.

MY DEAR LADY WALDEGRAVE,

As to *the secret* which I was desirous to communicate to you as a mark of my confidence and friendship, it is this—I had been for many months busily employed (at the earnest desire of some friends) in preparing a work which might assist in forming the principles of *her*, who in all probability will be our future queen. I should have desired your acceptance of a copy as soon as it was published, which was more than a fortnight ago, but I wished you to be able to say, if questioned by the Duchess, or any other person, that you had not received it *from the author*. As I do not, however, feel satisfied at keeping you in the dark any longer, I write this little history. In spite of all my secrecy, I was soon found out, not from its having been betrayed, but from the style, and other internal evidence. I did not, however, avow it, and I even corresponded with the Bishop of Exeter, who seemed highly to approve the work, without putting my name, and he addresses me by the appellation of *Sir*. I have not yet sent a copy to Princess Sophia, but think to do it soon. It is a disadvantage at first to any work to appear without a name, as it causes it to be slowly known. In speaking of it, however, you may say with truth, that though written for royalty, it was meant to

Digitized by Google

be useful also to all young persons of rank and liberal education.

But it is high time I should advert to you. In my judgment one of the best proofs that sorrow has had its right effect on your mind is, that it has not incapacitated you for business, *your* businesses being duties. I well know that under the pressure of heavy affliction it is more soothing to the heart to sink down into the enjoyment of a kind of sad indulgence, and to make itself believe that this is as right as it is gratifying; especially while it mixes some pious thoughts with this unprofitable tranquillity. But who can say, even after the severest loss, I have no duties, no cares in life remaining. Much less can a tender mother say it, who has still so many looking to her advice, and what is almost more, to her example. It is not the smallest part of the good you may do them to let them see what effect great trials have upon your mind, and that Christianity enables you to bear up against such a heavy stroke. It is an excellent sign, that after the cares and labours of the day, you can return to your pious exercises and meditations with undiminished attention. This will be a good criterion by which to judge of your state.

I pray God you may be able to keep your hold upon the minds of those important young men. While they continue to make you their chief friend and confidante, I shall feel the less anxiety for their safety. Mutual sorrow, however, is so endearing a tie, that you must perhaps expect it will

Digitized by Google

slacken a *little*, when time and the society of the world shall have weakened the sense of sorrow. I do not mean that they will love you less, but perhaps the frankness and fulness of communication may in a small degree diminish, and that imperceptibly to themselves. Your good judgment and knowledge of the world will, I am persuaded, lead you to mix so much kindness and prudence with your moral and religious lessons, as to make them palatable, and of course useful.

Remember you are to thank not me, but Mrs. H. T—— for *the book*. I shall, however, be glad to know how you like it, and what you hear respecting it. Adieu, my dear Lady Waldegrave. That God Almighty may bless, support, and comfort you, is the hearty prayer of

Your very faithful and affectionate,

H. More.

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

Barley Wood, Oct. 16, 1805.

My dear Friend,

I am just recovering from a pretty severe illness, which confined me to my bed for nearly a fortnight. Indeed these bilious attacks grow on me. Patty is a sad sufferer; my eldest sister has also a dangerous attack, so that we have been three or four of us in bed at a time. All this to account for my neglect of ——.

You would weep over Cheddar if you saw the change occasioned by the death of Drewitt: no

Digitized by Google

resident minister; only a gallopper from Wells on a Sunday, to a twelve minutes' sermon—the church of course thins.

Lord —— teazes me with long-winded letters of sixteen pages about doing good, and teaching in schools and cottages, &c. He is one of those thick-headed, bustling and good sort of people, who having a constitutional nervous kind of *besoin* of doing something, have luckily turned their activity to objects of some use; and instead of being mischievous, do some good, with a large mixture of zeal, and prejudice, and blunder. The *animal* rather than the *man* is active.

My dear friend Mrs. Boscawen left me a legacy of about forty volumes, chiefly the Port-royal authors. I had intended to indulge myself with other reading this summer; but am so fascinated with these writers, that I scarcely ever look into another book. May God bless you in this world, and make us all more fit for a better.

Your's ever,

H. More.

Extract of a letter from Mrs. H. More to her sister.

Fulham Palace.

A few days ago I had a very interesting conversation on the 'Hints to a Princess,' with the Duke of Gloucester,[1] at the Duchess's villa at Gloucester Lodge. The party consisted of their Royal

[1] The late Duke.

Digitized by Google

Highnesses the Duke and Duchess, Princess Sophia, the Dowager Lady Kingston, Bishop of London and Mrs. Porteus, Bishop of Bath and Wells and Mrs. Beadon, Bishop of Chichester, Mrs. Kennicott, and ourselves. After breakfast, when the company went to walk in the gardens, the Duke did me the honour of addressing me at large on the subject of the new book. The encouraging things he said carried with them an air of sincerity which was very gratifying. The observations he made did great credit to his judgment, discrimination, and delicacy of taste. His remarks on the education of the great were such as I could hardly have expected, from the limited circles in which princes live; but what pleased me most was the earnestness he expressed that their early years should be kept as much as possible from every sort of knowledge which could communicate any taint of evil to the mind. He added—'No boys were ever bred up in a greater ignorance of evil than the king and myself. At fourteen years old we retained all our native innocence.' To this period of life he said he always adverted with peculiar satisfaction.

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Knox.

Barley Wood, 21st January, 1806.

MY DEAR SIR,

It would be hard to say, which is the stronger, my ingratitude or my disinterestedness; or to put it better, whether my negligence in not acknowledging your last delightful letter sooner, is to be

Digitized by Google

blamed, or the self-denial of my silence to be commended, when by having written an early answer, I might have entitled myself to the great pleasure of an early reply. Leaving you, who are the best casuist I know, to determine this nice point, I shall content myself with telling you, with how much pleasure and how much profit I always peruse your letters; and that the last might have laid claim to an immediate answer, had I not delayed it in the expectation of reading you in print, instead of thanking you for your manuscript.

You will readily believe, my kind friend, how much I was gratified with your most warm and eloquent effusion. The ardent friendship, the fine writing, and the generous spirit of liberal (too liberal) praise, equally satisfied, (that is too frigid a word) my feelings and my taste. I must chide you, however, for your too great delicacy, in not having pointed out a few of the many faults,—an error which I trust you will repair in the subsequent part of your comments. The little nibbling in the first Christian Observer, though well intentioned, was not judiciously done for a friendly critic, who, I am of opinion, should always point out *specific* faults, and not excite general suspicions and make vague charges, especially where they intend to serve the interests of a work. They have however made their *amende honorable*, by the very able and spirited manner in which they have assailed the Edinburgh Review of 'The Princess.' Of this formidable Scotch attack, I had heard much,

Digitized by Google

but did not know the ground on which it was made, till I saw it in the Christian Observer. For though I read evil report as well as good report, when it falls in my way, and quietly kiss the rod, I do not know that I am in duty bound to give six shillings to my flagelator. I ought not to complain of their extreme unfairness and misrepresentations respecting me, when they treat prophets and apostles with still less ceremony.

But to turn to pleasanter topics. I remember always to have felt a kind of envious pleasure in reading Lord Clarendon's account of the delightful society of friends, the Seldens, the Chillingworths, the Hales, and the Digbys, with whom he lived in learned and elegant retirement at the seat of the accomplished Lord Falkland. Such a feeling, animated by the lively sentiment which an actual acquaintance with most of the party bestows, did I experience at your description of the society and the intercourse at Cashel. I am charmed with your account of the Archbishop, and I bless the good providence of God which has lifted such virtues into such a station, their appropriate niche.

We have had here for four or five days on a visit, a clergyman of superior learning; a very respectable, correct man, but one of the most strenuous disciples of the Daubenian school. Of that school he is an exact, though, perhaps, rather favourable specimen, on account of his natural mildness of character; which happy temperament, however, does not in the least remove his prejudices,

Digitized by Google

or diminish his unrelenting hatred of those writers, whom it is the fashion to call evangelical; but which you and I had rather distinguish by the name of spiritual. He reverences Kipling, as I reverence Luther. He added, that he has no idea of the possibility of Christianity without episcopacy. I assured him of my great reverence for episcopacy, observing at the same time, that I thought that charity, love, and self-government, gave a more unequivocal proof of Christianity, than a bare adherence to any particular form of church government. He thought this highly heretical. When I spoke of spiritual religion, and the sort of writers whom I thought likely to promote it, he declared he had never read one devotional book. I ventured to recommend Pascal, upheld as his reputation is by mathematics on one side and brilliant wit on the other, and Nicole, whose strength of argument I hoped might gain some quarter for his serious piety; but he will soon find out that their talents will not cover that multitude of sins which their spirituality involves, and that Jansenism is only methodism in French. The misery is, that these staunch polemics read only one side of the question; and if, through natural mildness, they should ever be disposed to relax, the monthly appearance of the Antijacobin Review new braces their slackening bigotry, and rekindles the smouldering embers of immortal hate.

Methinks I had rather talk of anything than public affairs. The political horizon looks black and lowering. The foundations of the earth seem

Digitized by Google

out of course; but, blessed be God there is an omnipotent hand which directs the storm. Oh that we did not exclude him virtually from the government of His own world, by looking to means only! Is it matter of comfort or of alarm that we are to have forty thousand Russians to assist John Bull in defending himself at home? I am grieved to learn, from a friend of his, that Mr. Pitt is in a very shattered state;—voice and appetite gone—takes no sustenance but eggs and brandy twice a-day: but his mind is still firm.

Do you know that the last actual information I had of you, was from the Duchess of Gloucester? She had heard much of you from Lady Kingston, and her Royal Highness was aware how much satisfaction it would give me to read the pleasing accounts she was so good as to transmit respecting you from that lady.

If, through the undeserved mercy of God, we should continue a free and uninvaded country, we shall look forward to the hope of seeing you in the summer.

Amidst the tide of troubles, which seems preparing to overflow us, it is a great mercy that our good King remains so well. He has, I am persuaded, strong sentiments of piety, and great trust in God; it is deeply to be lamented that those about him, in their zeal to amuse him, contribute considerably to weaken his religious habits, particularly in having drawn him sadly to relax in his observation of the Sabbath. I wish any one had the honest courage to tell him a little circumstance

Digitized by Google

respecting a prelate, whom he has always loved and honoured—the Bishop of Worcester. The king had last summer intended a visit to his venerable aged friend, and a letter was sent to fix the day of his coming to him. The bishop happened to receive this letter on a Sunday, and no intreaties of his family could prevail on him to open it till the next day, lest the knowledge that the king was on the point of coming should agitate his spirits, and indispose him for the duties of the day. I record with pleasure, this little circumstance of a once polemical and worldly prelate. My dear Bishop of London is going on nobly.

My correspondence with you is something in the spirit of our wily African traders from Bristol, who are not ashamed to send the poor *blackies* beads, buttons, and bits of glass, and to expect gold dust in return.

Best regards to Miss Ferguson. I hope your delicate health stands this terribly relaxing weather. All here are much your's; as is, my dear Sir, with the truest sentiments of affectionate esteem,

Your faithful and very obliged friend,

HANNAH MORE.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. H. More to Lady Waldegrave.

Barley Wood, Feb. 1, 1806.

MY DEAR LADY WALDEGRAVE,

While I was reading your kind and affecting letter last night, so strongly picturing human calamities, Patty interrupted me by reading from the newspaper an event which I fear must nearly have overwhelmed your heart, already bowed down with such a succession of trials and sorrows. I truly sympathize in *your* heavy portion of this fresh and great public loss. What a calamity for British India! I do think that the sudden removal of three such public men as we are now deploring, is a token of divine displeasure against this long favoured country. For Mr. Pitt's death we have felt all the regret which is due to talents which have seldom been equalled, and integrity which has never been surpassed. I agree entirely with you, that we must not, however, overvalue the instrument, but look up to the hand that employs, directs, and removes it at his pleasure. Yet when I contemplate the public losses we are now groaning under, I cannot help thinking that when the master of a fabric takes away its support, it looks as if it were intended that the building should fall. In the more *recent* instance, you, my dear Lady W. are not confounded with the common mourners of an empire, but have to lament the loss of an attached and valuable friend. May God give you the consolations of which you stand so much in need! You

Digitized by Google

have clearly one of the most decided marks of his own children, that of the frequent visitations of his afflicting hand. Yet a little while and how will the scene be changed to those who love and serve God. Tears shall be exchanged for joy, darkness for light, doubt for certainty, and faith for fruition! I tremble for the life of H. T.—he seems to be hastening to that blessed state for which indeed he is so ripe. I really fear he is fast declining.

My own health has been bad the whole winter; and within the last month I have had several alarming attacks. Had I been tolerably well I would have come to you for a night or two, for I really long to see you. It is too probable that my physician will send me to Cheltenham early in the spring, about the time of the usual London journey. But if it please God, I will not leave the country without seeing you; and will if possible make you a visit, if it should be inconvenient for you to come hither. Our horse is still lame, so that I have not been beyond the gate these three months.

When you have five minutes leisure I shall beg a line to say how you do. Be assured, my dear Lady W. of the cordial esteem and fervent prayers of your very

Faithful and sincere,

H. More.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER III.

In the year 1806, Mrs. H. More was attacked by a dangerous and tedious illness, which appeared to have originated in a cold, caught in returning from one of her schools. A pleuritic fever succeeded, of so inveterate a kind, as for many months to resist the strongest remedies. Under her protracted sufferings, her composure and placidity of temper were so remarkable, as to make those around her exclaim, 'Would that her enemies and traducers could be in her sick room!'

A year had nearly elapsed before her pulse could be materially reduced, or a change effected on which any hope of her restoration to health could be reasonably founded. It was a sad interval of suspense to all who felt her worth, or had lived within the warm influence of her benevolence or friendship. The poor seemed to lose all care for themselves, in their concern for their benefactress; and the great, and even the gay, joined with the humble and virtuous, in a common partnership of sorrow. No class of society had escaped her searching philanthropy, and all seemed to have an equal interest in the prolongation of her ex-

Digitized by Google

istence. The letters which were received by her sisters, upon this occasion, amounted to some hundreds. They were destroyed; but had they been preserved, their one subject would have excluded the variety to which letters owe their interest. A short extract, however, from a letter received by her sister from her physician, whose watchful attention and profound skill ought not to be forgotten, will interest the reader.

From Dr. Lovell to Mrs. M. More.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I cannot express how much comfort your account of your excellent sister has given me, and I sincerely hope and pray we may be able to prolong a life so valuable to her friends, and so beneficial to society. Should it please God to crown my endeavours with success, it is evident you will owe me no gratitude, and, I have no doubt, you will pay it where it is most merited. I do not mean to undervalue your kind expressions, but should I be permitted to save your sister, I shall, in so doing, benefit thousands, a consideration more pleasant and comfortable than all others.

R. LOVELL.

It was nearly two years before her recovery was sufficiently established to enable her to turn her thoughts towards any literary objects; but with her slow returning health, her mind rapidly resumed its energies, and was advancing in its forward march,

Digitized by Google

while her body followed with a languid progress; and her friends were not a little surprised to find her pen, in spite of her infirmity, actively engaged in executing a scheme which had long occupied her mind, of presenting Christian principles and duties in the dress of narrative, in the colours of character, and with the breathing vivacity of dialogue and discussion. But some letters and transactions which belong to this interval must have place, before we say more of this work.

From Mr. Stephen to Mrs. H. More.

Middle Temple, London, April 7th, 1807.

DEAR MADAM,

Mrs. Stephen is, I thank God, progressively, though slowly, recovering from the direct effect of her sad accident, in a kindlier way than her constitution promised; but the stomach feels the consequences of her long confinement to one posture, and, if I had written on that subject two days ago, I should have written rather anxiously. Since that time there is much improvement, and it encourages me the more, because it seems to be produced by a new tonic medicine of much efficacy, which she has begun to use; if not by another cause, which is now likely to last—the genial weather, which has at length arrived.

This trial, though a mitigated, has been a long and severe one; but it has been admirably sustained, and so as to raise her in the estimation of all who know her; though I will venture to say to an

Digitized by Google

old and partial friend of her's, that was no easy work.

To myself the accident was a source not only of alarm and anxiety, but of gloomy speculations, to which I am by no means in general addicted. My views of the ways of Providence will perhaps never again be quite so cheerful and pleasing as they have been; for though I have seen and felt many sorrows, and have been no unobservant witness of the sufferings of the pious and the good, I never intimately knew any case which so strongly exemplified the truth, that "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth," and that "we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God." To human eyes, it would have seemed that her sufferings, poor dear woman, were great enough, and her enjoyments scanty enough before; nor was there ever a person more disposed to supply, by generous self-denial, and voluntary submission to hardships in the path of duty, the common offices of exterior or interior chastisements, while her constitution was become more than ever a source of daily sufferings. Her patience and cheerful resignation under them had also visibly increased.

But God sees not as we see. To his unerring wisdom this new trial was known to be salutary, or it would not have been permitted. I am not distrustful, therefore, of the care or the goodness of that providence which I have always loved to contemplate; but regard its awful discipline with more apprehensions than before. "My heart trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments."

Digitized by Google

If such afflictions be necessary for such a meek, chastised, patient, and faithful servant of God, what have *I* not to expect, and what have not many who are dear to me, to expect in this life, or to apprehend in the next!

God, however, mixes consolation, even in the bitterest cup. In my case, he has so equally balanced good and evil, that, if my mind, naturally sanguine, has never desponded, so it has scarcely ever been permitted to exult. *The abolition of the slave trade!* How happy would that event have made me, if it had not been counterpoised by domestic affliction and anxiety! In spite of private feelings, however, it has rejoiced me, and, I hope, inspired much of gratitude to the Most High. What a promise of happiness does it bear to millions, and hundreds of millions, of our species! From what a load of odious guilt and shame does it deliver our country! It enables us to hope well of our native land, to put up hearty prayers for its prosperity, unmixed with the chilling reflection, that the destiny of a large part of the children of Adam is poisoned by the prosperity of England. May God so influence the hearts of our new rulers, that the righteous principle of this measure may not be departed from, but followed up with those further efforts for the final deliverance of Africa, on which the late ministry had resolved.

But I am troubling you with far too long a letter, and therefore must take leave of that favourite subject. With kind respects to Miss Martha More and your other sisters, whom I have not the pleasure

Digitized by Google

personally to know, and with best wishes for your health and happiness,

I am, dear Madam,
Very respectfully and very sincerely yours,
JAMES STEPHEN.

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

Barley Wood, July 30, 1808.

The sight of your hand-writing, my dear friend, rejoiced me; and I thank God there was nothing in your letter to diminish the pleasure the subscription gave me. A vague rumour had reached us that you were coming to Clifton: to be sure it would have been more profitable to *us*;—I hope East Bourne may be better for *you*. To Weymouth I owe, under God, a considerable increase of strength, but I could not bring myself to stay more than a fortnight. Though we only went one stage a day, travelling disagreed with me. I am certainly much stronger, but I suffer great pain, and my nights are restless. I do not sleep even tolerably above once a week. At the end of nearly two years' confinement, God in his great mercy enabled me to go to church, and I have since been twice to the schools, which are very flourishing. Though we are neither of us very competent, we hold on. In October, we shall keep our twentieth anniversary of the opening of Cheddar-schools. We have very many children of those who were heretofore scholars, and within the last eight or nine years above one hundred are gone out to service (well instructed

Digitized by Google

and promising,) from Cheddar only. Do you remember John Hill, our first scholar, whose piety and good manners you used to notice? He afterwards became a teacher, but war tore him from us. Judge of our pleasure to see him at Weymouth in full regimentals, acting as paymaster and sergeant-major! There was a sort of review. Everybody praised the training of eight hundred men, so well disciplined; the officers said they were fit for any service. One of them said to us, 'All this is owing to the great abilities and industry of Sergeant Hill—he is the greatest master of military tactics we have. At first he was so religious that we thought him a Methodist, but we find him so good a soldier, and so correct in his morals, that we now do not trouble ourselves about his religion.' He will, probably, be adjutant on the first vacancy.

I did feel for you on leaving Broomfield, but still more, I confess, for those you left. Clapham seems coming to nothing. By the way, we never had so good a meeting as this year at Shipham. I did not dare venture. Poor Patty, though ill able, entertained near a hundred gentry at dinner, among whom were about twenty clergy. It is a fatiguing and expensive day, but I trust it has had its uses. Many similar institutions have sprung up in consequence. We had a young Irish nobleman there, who talks of setting up something of the sort. He is lately settled in this neighbourhood, and seems fond of visiting us. He has been spending seven years amidst the seductions of infidelity on the

Digitized by Google

continent, but now seems remarkably well-disposed. He rides here to breakfast, ten miles, before eight o'clock; that he may not lose prayers.

A letter this moment from the Ville de Paris. Bedford says things now look very promising from the Spaniards—a week ago we were rather desponding.

Pray give my love to Mrs. W. in which my sisters join. Patty desires to be very particularly remembered.

Your's, my dear friend,

H. More.

From Mrs. H. More to Sir W. W. Pepys.

Barley Wood, 1808.

My dear Sir William,

No! I cannot express to you a tenth part of the pleasure which I felt on reading your most kind and interesting letter. The delightful family picture was so pleasing to my mind, that I was never weary of contemplating it, and I am in love with all the portraits individually and aggregately. Every change of this very capricious season brings on a fresh attack of fever,—and though the calendar tells us it is April,—my own feelings corroborate the testimony of the leafless shrubs, and the brown grass, that it is December. I confess I have had intervals in which I *could* have written, but it is so unpleasant to be always speaking ill of oneself, that I deferred my letter from one week to another, in the hope of being able to tell you that I was

Digitized by Google

emancipated from my long imprisonment. I thank God, however, that I continue to bear it cheerfully: and when the *rigours of the month of May* are past, I trust I shall again experience the blessings of fresh air—

> He does not scorn it who has long endured
> A fever's agonies, and fed on drugs.

How have I felt, how have I *tasted* these lines of Cowper! I remember it was said more than twenty years ago, that I was the only one of the old school who strongly relished Cowper, but then he had not published the Task, which, I am sure, must have converted *you*, though, I think, our friends, Mrs. Montagu and Lord Orford, were never brought over. Beattie came over to us, but slowly, and I took the credit of his conversion to myself: I believe I rather frightened him into it. And so you agree with me that conversation is absolutely extinct. The classic spirit has, I think, declined with it, and I should think poetry extinct also, did it not in Walter Scott give signs of life. I have not read 'Marmion,' but hear it is not unworthy of the author of the 'Lay.'

I would have given something if I could have drank tea with your family party the evening after I had finished '*Corinne*,' which your account led me to read. There never *was* such a book! such a compound of genius and bad taste! such a fermentation of sense and nonsense! The descriptions of Italy are the best, and the descriptions of love the worst I ever met with. There is no shading.

Digitized by Google

As there is little nature, it excites little interest; and the virtuous hero is to me a gloomy specimen of frigid sentimentality. Corinne herself gave me too much the idea of Dr. Graham's Goddess of Health, or the French Goddess of Reason, or the English Attitudinarian of Naples, for me to take a very lively interest in her. Yet let me acknowledge, that though like Pistol I swallowed and execrated, yet I went on swallowing; and I must own it is a book which requires great knowledge, and very considerable powers of mind, to produce. She never stumbles so much as when she attempts to introduce Christianity, as there is no subject on which she appears so completely ignorant. You see, evidently, that she drags it into play, as a creditable novelty, having, I am told, tried Atheism without success in Delphine, which I have never read.

I have been reading through two books sent me by the authors, my friends, both clergymen of Bristol. One, the life of Thuanus. One felt glad to be introduced into such respectable company as the authors and statesmen of the days of Henri Quatre, the Sullys, the l'Hospitals, the Casaubons, the Heinsiuses, and the Grotiuses. I counselled the author to translate the huge works of Thuanus, but he says their irreclaimable prolixity must ever prevent their being popular. The other is a pamphlet, 'Latium Redivivum.' The object is to repress the universality of the French language, that provoking criterion of the ascendancy of France, and to restore the popular use of the language of Rome;

Digitized by Google

at least, to make it the colloquial tongue of schools and universities, and the medium of our communication with foreigners; and especially that ambassadors shall negotiate in Latin. And why not as well now as in the days of our once 'right-lerned' queen? Though I fear some of our corps diplomatique would not be very Ciceronian.

But it is time to revert to your kind letter; and allow me to say, that from no part of it did I derive such heart-felt satisfaction as from the evidence it afforded me of the pious feelings of your heart, and your devout recognition of the merciful hand whence your multiplied blessings flow. O, my good friend! there is no other stable foundation for solid comfort, but the Christian religion; not barely acknowledged as a truth from the conviction of external evidence, (strong and important as that is,) but embraced as a principle of hope and joy and peace, and felt in its suitableness to the wants and necessities of our nature, as well as in its power to alleviate, and even to sanctify, our sorrows. Little as has been my own progress in this school, yet that little was an unspeakable support to me on the bed of sickness; and in my weak and helpless state, I often thought, what would have become of me, if I had then had to begin to learn the elements of religion!

You have doubtless heard that I have had far greater trials than any which sickness could inflict. I will only say, in a few words, that two Jacobin and infidel curates, poor and ambitious, formed the design of attracting notice, and getting preferment,

Digitized by Google

by attacking some charity schools, (which, with no small labour, I have carried on in this county for near twenty years,) as seminaries of vice, sedition, and disaffection. At this distance of time, for it has now ended in their disgrace and shame, it will make you smile when I tell you a few of the charges brought against me, viz. that I hired two men to assassinate one of these clergymen;—that I was actually taken up for seditious practices;—that I was with Hadfield on his attack on the king's life: one of them strongly insinuated this from the pulpit, and then caused the newspaper, which related the attack, to be read at the church door. At the same time, mark the consistency! they declared that I was in the pay of Mr. Pitt, and the grand instigator (poor I) of the war, by mischievous pamphlets; and to crown the whole, that I was concerned with Charlotte Corday in the murder of Marat!!! That wicked and needy men should invent this, is not so strange as that they should have found Magazines, Reviews, and Pamphleteers to support them. My declared resolution never to defend myself, certainly encouraged them to go on. Yet how thankful am I that I kept that resolution; though the grief and astonishment excited by this combination nearly cost me my life. I can now look back, not only without emotion, to this attack, but it has been even matter of *thankfulness* to me; it helped to break my too strong attachment to the world, it showed me the vanity of human applause, and has led me, I hope, to be *more* anxious about the motives of my actions, and *less* anxious about their consequences.

Digitized by Google

I am happy in the esteem of my neighbours, and my schools flourish. I have a sister whose associated labours supply my lack of service. I had intended to have said more in answer to your letter. Your two eldest sons I well remember, and Miss Pepys. I rejoice they are all such blessings to you, and to their excellent mother.

I beg my most affectionate respects to Lady Pepys. How glad I am at your honourable and profitable retreat from your professional labours. May God bless your clerical son, and make him an instrument to his glory!

Your's very sincerely,
H. More.

From Sir W. W. Pepys to Mrs. H. More.

Wimpole Street, May 12, 1808.

My dear Friend,

To have written to me at all so kindly and so spontaneously as you did, excited my warmest gratitude; but to follow it up by another most friendly and delightful letter, convinces me that you will not be sorry, during the short space before 'we go hence and are no more seen,' to hear now and then from your old and sincere friend. I am aware, however, that such kindness demands some discretion on my part, and that I must not alarm you by too quick a succession of letters, but encourage you to resume the habit of writing to me now and then, not as a task, but as one of those many occupations

Digitized by Google

in which your whole life has been passed, the object of which has always been to afford comfort and satisfaction to somebody.

The day is not long enough for what I find to do, now that I am supposed to do nothing; and if I can but so employ the short remainder of my time as to be able to render a good account of it hereafter, I have no apprehension of not passing it to my own satisfaction, while it shall please God to continue my health. "Thou upholdest me in my health," are the words in which I daily acknowledge my dependance on God's goodness for the continuance of it, and I humbly hope, as I do not trust in my own strength, but look up to him with the deepest sense of gratitude for all his mercies, that they will be continued to me. But I "rejoice with trembling" when I hear of such disasters as the loss of Lord Royston, and ask myself, how would it indeed have been possible for me to bear the stroke! Indeed, my good friend, I am thoroughly sensible that if religion is so necessary to keep us temperate in prosperity, it is our only support in adversity. I can safely say that the most delightful moments of my life have been those in which I have raised my heart towards heaven, in thankfulness for the innumerable blessings which I have enjoyed. If devotion be, therefore, my greatest delight in the time of my health, what other comfort can I look to in the time of my tribulation, and in the hour of my death! How strangely unacquainted with the delights of religion are those who consider it only as a system of hard duties to be performed, which afford

Digitized by Google

here nothing but labour and sorrow, though hereafter they may be attended with their reward. I am persuaded, on the contrary, that as Bishop Horne says beautifully on our Saviour's caution against too great anxiety for the morrow, that he has consulted in his precepts our happiness here as well as hereafter. By the way, did you ever see those beautiful applications of passages from the Classics of Bishop Horne, published by Mr. Jones? One of them was peculiarly pleasing to me, from Terence's Phormio, act 1, scene 3.

Poor Mrs. Ord! she is, I think, the last of those we used so often to meet—how few old friends left! *Apparent rari nantes in gurgite vasto.* You see how profuse I am of my latin, but I have great pleasure in communicating any classical allusion where I know it will be relished. As to the common intercourse of life, it seems to me that I might have walked up and down St. James's Street all my life with Florio, for any use that literature is of in *conversation*, but it is my great delight when alone, and *that* is much more important.

As my time is now more at my command, it has occurred to me, that I could not make a better use of it, than to take an active part in soliciting the assistance of the public to prevent the Middlesex Hospital from being shut up: for as people bestow their charity upon *new* institutions, they are apt to let the old ones shift for themselves, till, by degrees, our finances have become so inadequate to the relief of the many poor wretches who apply, that we have been obliged to appeal to the public for immediate

Digitized by Google

assistance. I mention this because I think it not improbable that you may know some persons who have much to give, and would not be sorry to know where their money might be best applied.

Have you read Shee's Rhymes on Art? Some parts are excellent, particularly those on the French Revolution, where he speaks of new experiments in government, made with the same apathy as if they were performing some operations in chemistry—

> 'What shapes of social order rise refined,
> From speculation's crucible combined,
> While cool state chemists watch the boiling brim,
> And life's low dregs upon the surface swim:
> What though midst passion's fiery tumults tost,
> A generation's in the process lost,
> The calm philosopher pursues his plan,
> Regardless of his raw material, man.'

Did I tell you how much my son and I were struck with a work of Madame de Stäel, '*Sur la Literature.*' We both thought it excellent, though possibly in some places too refined. As to 'Marmion,' I do not know such powers of representation in any modern poetry: but there are no lines which one wishes to get by heart, like those in the 'Last Lay,' and many of them bear such marks of haste and idleness, that he who could do so much better ought to be whipped for them. The battle is the best I remember since old Homer. You see the banners stoop and rise again. It has been upon every table this winter.

And now, my good friend, have you had enough of my poetico-prosaic epistle? or shall I tell you

Digitized by Google

that at the age of sixty-eight, I am sitting for my picture at the earnest request of my dear children? Could I but show you the letter in which my son conveyed his own and his sister's request, you would say, that you never saw a *picture* of filial attachment which gave you more pleasure; what then must it have afforded me! People used to threaten me when I first undertook to educate my sons, that they would hate me as their schoolmaster, but, thank God, I am daily receiving marks of the sincerest attachment from them.

Do not fail to cherish the remembrance of me, as of one who has never ceased to entertain the most cordial attachment to you, mixed up with a great degree of veneration for your piety, virtues, and talents; and if you ever do permit yourself to offer up a prayer for your friends, let me hope that you will join with me, in supplication that we may meet in heaven!

Ever your's,

W. W. PEPYS.

From Mrs. H. More to Sir W. W. Pepys.

Barley Wood, Dec. 19, 1808.

MY DEAR SIR WILLIAM,

You must not judge of the pleasure I receive from your letters by the celerity of my answers, nor conclude that my friendship is as capricious as my health, because I do not show it by overt acts. Your last pleasant remembrance received, I am ashamed to say, early in the summer, contained one

Digitized by Google

passage that was really tantalizing, viz.: 'was there any house to be had in this neighbourhood capacious enough for your large family?' If I could have answered affirmatively, do you think I should have deferred writing a single post? Our pretty country is very thinly planted indeed with gentlemen's houses, and of spare houses there is not one. Yet the bare suggestion, that had that been the case, we might have spent together some hours, not unpleasant—not unprofitable, was rather vexatious.

I have not yet recovered any thing like health. I am in almost constant pain; my nights are frequently bad; and I am almost totally confined to the house. Yet I have so many mercies! I have such a pleasant prison—would you could see it—my fever is gone—my spirits are not bad. I am able to employ myself, I should rather say amuse myself, and to see not only my neighbours, but generally to have a succession of passing friends in the house, one or two at a time; which suits an invalid better than great country dinners, which in my very best estate, I always thought one of the miseries of rural felicity.

Among my more intellectual neighbours, are Mr. Addington, Sir Abraham Elton, and Mr. Whalley, men of taste and elegant literature. My valuable and pious friend lady Waldegrave is also come to settle near us. She has had more domestic sorrows, and has borne them with more Christian fortitude than any one I know. The last transient visitor who honoured our humble cottage was the Duke of

Digitized by Google

Gloucester;—we had not met since the abolition of the slave trade.

My old friend Dowager Lady Spencer, whom I had not seen for many years, has been spending a few days with us. There is the same animation, and frank pleasant manners: nothing I think is altered but the impression which time has made on the face.

You will forgive all this verbiage, if, like me, you think it interesting to have an old and absent friend realized to you after so long a separation.

I have been quite a wild enthusiast about Spain, but now, as is commonly the fate of enthusiasts, my spirits are quite sunk. I have been making all my clever young friends learn the language of these noble patriots; and all my little Spanish library is dispersed among them, *par ci, par là,* except my nice edition of Don Quixote, which dear Mrs. Carter left me at her death. When will this second scourge of God have done his work? When the end for which he was sent to torment the earth shall be accomplished. He who uses the rod can break it in a moment: but the end seems not yet. I was amused yesterday with a farmer: speaking of Buonaparte, he said, there was but one way to put an end to his destructive course; 'he has already,' said he, 'changed his religion many times; he has been Mussulman, Catholic, &c. Make him a Quaker, and then he *can't* fight.'

A propos of Mussulmen, have you read Mathilde? There is a wonderful fertility of imagina-

Digitized by Google

tion, rich description and varied incident. The story is very dramatic and well conducted; yet I found it a little tedious. I think, after all, her object is to prove that a Turk may be a better man than a Christian. *Elizabeth* was a very pretty tale. How one name suggests the idea of another woman of the same name, for it is difficult to speak of Elizabeth, without speaking of Miss Smith. You have doubtless seen and wondered at her life and fragments. I knew and admired her long ago, before I suspected what knowledge lay concealed under that modest countenance. Her mother has just sent me a beautiful engraving of her, which I much value as a striking resemblance. Her translation of Job, which is in preparation, is said to be the finest ever made. I am reading her Klopstock—but to own an unfashionable truth, I am not fond of German poetry or prose. It seems to me more diffuse and less classical than that of the other modern languages. I ought to observe, however, that I am a very inadequate judge, as I do not understand the German. I never took a fancy to it.

I hope you have read Paley's Sermons. They have given me singular pleasure, and that from a variety of causes, but chiefly because I trace in them a change, much for the better, in the author's principles, which were certainly very unsound. I knew the man, I was an admirer of his former writings—the sense always vigorous, and clear as pellucid crystal, with a power of illustration which I have scarcely seen equalled in any modern writer; but with a laxity on certain points, which has done

Digitized by Google

much harm. I am truly gratified that so able a man should have borne his dying testimony (for the work is posthumous) to the great truths, which he had not before so fully recognized; and, coming from one whose bias was thought to be on the other side, he will be read with full confidence, and without that suspicion, which, I am sorry to say, is too apt to be entertained for writers of very decided piety.

My best regards to Lady P. and your young people. I wonder if I shall ever see them.

Your's most faithfully,

H. More.

Some check was given to the alacrity with which Mrs. H. More was addressing herself to her new literary undertaking, by the death of Bishop Porteus, who finished his course with Christian joy, and with the hope of the faithful, in the year 1809, and in the seventy-eighth of his beneficial life. A few months before his departure, he appears to have paid a visit to Barley Wood, where he passed some days in much languor of body, but with a mind cheerfully expecting the approaching summons. His decay was very gentle and gradual, and he seemed to pass out of existence with the same peace and cheerfulness which had accompanied him through it. It would be difficult, perhaps, to produce another instance of zeal and urbanity, dignity and humility, decision and candour, so exemplified in a single character. His death was to Mrs. More an irreparable loss. Their minds were much alike. They were both equally unoffending and uncompromising, earnest and mode-

Digitized by Google

rate, firm and affectionate. Their long friendship was begun in a correspondence of taste and sentiment, and was continued and strengthened by an identity of trust and hope. The interchange of letters between them had little intermission, and amidst all the varied entertainment afforded by her correspondence, we cannot but lament that so little of that which passed between her and this good bishop should be extant. It is well known that these letters from Mrs. More to her venerable friend, were composed with much care and spirit, sparkling with her brightest thoughts on manners and books, and rich in spiritual comments, and applications of religious truth. The Bishop had declared his positive will, that his executors should destroy his papers, and it is to be feared that the letters of Mrs. More, through inadvertence or a too literal compliance with the general injunction, were made to share a common fate with the Bishop's own documents.

Dr. Porteus bequeathed to Mrs. More a legacy of £100. and she consecrated to his memory in the plantation near her house at Barley Wood, an urn, with an inscription as unpretending as her sorrow was sincere. 'To Beilby Porteus, late Lord Bishop of London, in memory of long and faithful friendship.' The life of the Bishop by Dean Hodgson has recorded his last visit to Carlton House, and the apostolical purpose of that visit, in relation to which it may be added as an interesting fact, that immediately before the dying prelate sat out on his holy errand, Mrs. More received a note from him, requesting her prayers for the divine blessing on the

Digitized by Google

arduous and delicate task he had thought it was his duty to undertake, without further explaining his purpose; and in a few days afterwards she received a second note, with which their earthly communication closed for ever, informing her of the success with which it had been attended.

From Bishop Porteus to Mrs. H. More.

May 2, 1809.

MY DEAR MRS. MORE,

I thank you for your delightful letter, but am now writing to you on a very different subject. From a concurrence of most untoward circumstances, I am in great difficulties and distresses. You will easily suppose I do not mean pecuniary distresses. No, they are of a very different nature. My great hope and resource is, what I have always had recourse to in such cases, prayer. Give me then your frequent and fervent prayers, and I shall hope for that most powerful protection of a gracious Providence, which I am convinced has never failed in similar cases.

B. LONDON.

May 5, 1809.

MY DEAR MRS. MORE,

Prayer has had its usual effect, and all is now perfectly right. B. L.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. Kennicott to Mrs. H. More.

Fulham, May 24, 1809.

I have much satisfaction in writing to you, my dearest friend, because I think the account I have to give of our beloved Bishop is such as will afford you great consolation. After his fine mind had yielded to the infirmities of his weak body, his imperfect and wandering ideas still led him to exert his small remaining strength in whatever appeared to him to tend to the glory of God; and the foundation of those two distressing notes to you was a report he had heard, of the institution of a club under the patronage of the Prince of Wales, which was to meet on a Sunday. Under this impression he requested an audience of the Prince, to intreat of him to fix on some other day. The audience was granted. Can any thing be imagined more affecting? Supported by two servants, and hardly able to move with their assistance, he got to the apartment of the Prince; and with agitated earnestness conjured him to fix on some other day for this meeting. The Prince received him most graciously, seemed much affected, said it was not a new institution, and that it was founded on charity, but that if the day could be changed to Saturday it should. It was during this business that he wrote those notes to you.

The last week was a most distressing one at the time, but now to be reflected upon with comfort.

Digitized by Google

Pious zeal and true Christian humility were prevalent amidst all his rambling. On the Friday he was brought to Fulham; on entering the great hall he clasped his hands and said, 'I thank God for permitting me to come once more to this place.' The next morning he said the air refreshed him, and admired the beauty of his lawn. He was carried down to dinner, and soon after was seized with something like a convulsion, was taken to his sofa, had a cordial given to him, fell into a quiet sleep for three hours, and only just opened his eyes to close them for ever on this world. He had frequently prayed, but always with devout submission to God's will, to be spared the pangs of death; and he was spared them.

In the drawer of a table at which he lately wrote, were found various little prayers and ejaculations written upon scraps of paper, even upon visiting tickets, anything which came to his hand as the pious thoughts rose in his mind.

Our dear Mrs. Porteus does not appear to have suffered in health, and I hope will not. For every thing else we must trust to time, which our merciful Father has ordained shall soften our greatest afflictions.

The last solemn offices were performed at Sundridge. He ordered that every thing should be done as humbly as was proper for his station. But it was impossible to keep it humble, so many of his numerous relations would attend.

Tell me about dear Patty. How continually I think of you both in this sad house.

Digitized by Google

My dearest friend, you know what a high opinion our beloved Bishop had of the effect of intercession, and particularly of your prayers. This awful week has led me to renew the resolutions I have so often made, and alas! so often broken, of amending my life; pray for me that I may keep these resolutions better than I have my former ones. The time, as you say, is short. I have now lived sixty-one years. A tremendous time to look back upon with so much wrong, and so little right in the dread retrospect. Mrs. Porteus sends her best love.

Your's ever most affectionately,

A. KENNICOTT.

From Mrs. H. More to Mrs. Kennicott.

Barley Wood, June 4, 1809.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your heart-breaking and heart-rejoicing letter was sent after me into Gloucestershire; but as we were on the move, I had neither time nor composure to answer it. We have been home three or four days, and were so fortunate as to have crossed the Severn in the only day in which we could have done it without storms.

After reading your most interesting letter once, I was obliged to put it away for several days before I could acquire fortitude to read it again. Most heartily do I praise God for the easy and peaceful departure of our ever-to-be lamented Bishop; but still more fervently do I bless the divine goodness

Digitized by Google

for having given him grace and strength to exhibit a spirit so heroically pious, so near the end of his race, and for having made his closing scene so bright. As long as I live I shall derive comfort from the recollection that his naturally timid and modest mind was enabled to give such an evidence of the power of true religion, as to present his dying frame, sustained by his Christian spirit, before the Prince, who perhaps, struck by the remembrance, may be influenced by it many years after the affecting vision passed before his eyes. I honour him more for this difficult exertion of piety than for a hundred acts of charity: because *they* were a gratification to his nature, but *this* was a triumph over it.

I write on the *birth-day!* How many times, or rather how incessantly, have Patty and I thought of you and dear Mrs. Porteus this whole day. How many anniversaries of it have we passed together! What a blank will this day seem to you both! Yet our sorrow is mitigated by many alleviating, many soothing considerations. His life had been long and prosperous,—happy and useful, far beyond the common lot. Full of days, of honours, and of virtues, his death was without a pang, and he may literally be said to have fallen asleep. It gives me the most solid pleasure, that, considering his frequent interruptions, from company and business, his mind retained so much spirituality as is manifested by the numerous scraps of prayers and ejaculations you speak of. Any particulars which may farther occur, of the state of his mind, I shall take a particular delight to hear.

Digitized by Google

I rejoice to hear that Mrs. Porteus's health has sustained tolerably this heavy blow. May it please God to sanctify the affliction to her, and to us all! May it quicken us in our preparation to follow him! For the dear Bishop's kind remembrance to me, I feel as I ought. I hope our sorrowing friend will not be displeased at my outwardly sympathizing in her afflictions, by putting on mourning. How do I mourn inwardly for the diocese of London! What a change! I think of the melancholy hours our friend is spending in preparing to quit a place so improved by their liberality, and so adorned by their good taste. I rejoice, however, that you are able to be with her; it will be no small mitigation of her painful feelings.

You said nothing about your health; pray repair this negligence, and let me hear how you bear these searching storms. They tear me sadly.

My sisters, especially Patty, join in every kind wish and remembrance to both.

Your's ever, my dear friend,
most affectionately,
H. More.

From Mrs. Kennicott to Mrs. H. More.

Fulham, June 23, 1809.

My dearest Friend,

My conscience reproaches me, and will not let me leave this house without sending you a few lines, to tell you how we have been going on, though I

Digitized by Google

could have done it more easily at several other times than now, when I am just setting off for Windsor. But indeed I have had much writing for dear Mrs. Porteus, and very much reading in obeying the order of our dear Bishop, almost all whose papers were to be burnt. Every thing we found tended to exalt our dear friend, to give fresh proof of his sincere piety, his profound humility, his industry in searching out the truth, and the best course to be adopted, in every circumstance that came before him in the way of business, lest he should be led into any error of conduct.

Dear Mrs. Porteus has gone through the whole sad business wonderfully, but a great trial is yet to come. She is now going to Sundridge, where she says, she 'dreads a calm;' for here the necessary business has filled up, though with melancholy employment, the vacancy which she will there find, with all its sad recollections. She sends her love to you. Love to all.

Ever yours,
A. K.

Extract of a letter from Sir William Pepys to Mrs. H. More.

Boughton, 1809.

We have passed this summer as the last, partly at Taplow, and partly at this place, but return to London on Friday, which I shall do with some regret, as here I catch every gleam of sun, from its

Digitized by Google

rising to its setting, and, as a friend of mine once said, 'I don't see what a man has to do in London, who has no share in the plunder of it.'

You are probably acquainted with every circumstance relating to your good Bishop's death. Mr. Streatfield says, that, the last Sunday before he died, he was supported to say grace at table, and Mrs. P. wished him to spare himself that exertion, or content himself with a bow of gratitude and reverence. But, weak as he was, he said, 'I know some *do* content themselves with a bow, or, when they say grace, do it as if they were ashamed of what they are doing; but I will say grace as long as I am able to utter it.'

W. W. PEPYS.

The work which next issued from Mrs. More's pen was an experiment upon which she did not venture without much anxious hesitation. She published it at first without her name, not entrusting the secret even to those very few who were usually in her confidence on similar occasions. It appeared in Dec. 1809, in two vols. octavo, under the title of 'Cœlebs in Search of a Wife,' and excited such immediate and universal attention, that she received, in the course of a few days, notice from her bookseller to prepare for a second edition: but before this edition could be put to press, and in less than a fortnight after the first appearance of the work, it was out of print, and the book-

Digitized by Google

sellers all over the country became clamorous for copies. In nine months after its first appearance, she was followed to Dawlish, whither she had gone to try the effect of repose and sea-air, by the eleventh edition, which presently gave place to the twelfth.

In America, 'Cœlebs' found a proportionably favourable reception; four editions succeeding each other with a rapidity almost unexampled in that country, where her works have been always duly appreciated. Thirty editions of 1000 copies each were printed in that country during the lifetime of Mrs. More. She continued for a long time after the publication of 'Cœlebs' to receive, to her no small amusement, letters from her intimate acquaintance, earnestly recommending her to read it, and giving a description of the characters, sentiments, and general tendency of the work. Others however, discovered her style before they had proceeded far in the perusal, and in letters of a humourous character, addressed her as its author. She stood firm, however, against all these attempts to draw a confession from her, till it had run through several editions. We will now produce some of the correspondence to which 'Cœlebs' gave rise; and at the head of objectors shall be placed the Roman Catholic priest, the Pope's vicar-general.

Digitized by Google

Buckland near Faringdon, 1809.

MADAM,

I have only lately had leisure to read your 'Cœlebs,' which, indeed, I have not yet finished. I call it yours because I am told you acknowledge yourself to be the author; and readily you may acknowledge it, for certainly it is a very excellent performance. Some persons, I know, have applied to it Lady Belfield's observation, (p. 383,) 'Surely, you would not have these serious doctrines brought forward in story-books?' My complaint is from another quarter. You, Madam, now, and on other occasions, have assumed the high office of a *censor morum*, and a censor also of religious practices and religious belief. To pronounce on these subjects, without danger of error, a very accurate knowledge should have been previously acquired. This knowledge you have not always, even when your censure is peremptory. Page 123, you say, 'Why, this is retaining all the worst part of popery. Here is the abstinence without the devotion; the outward observance without the interior humiliation; the suspending of sin, not only without any design of forsaking it, but with a fixed resolution of returning to it, and of increasing the gust by the forbearance.' As nothing more severe was ever said against the religion of Catholics; so was nothing ever uttered by their worst enemies, more groundless, more false, more calumnious. The whole passage contains not a particle of truth. I am a minister of that religion, and my name may

Digitized by Google

not be quite strange to you. Whence have you drawn your notions of your tenets? For of them you speak, and not of practice, which too often, even in the purity of Protestantism, I presume, cannot be defended. In all your reading have you never taken up *one* of our moral writers? Have you never, in the intercourse of a life, not the shortest, been so intimate with any Catholic, as to have made a single inquiry on the subject of his or her belief? It cannot, I think, have happened, that a mind such as yours should have rested satisfied with first impressions, and, not caring whether they were true or false, have boldly uttered them, as the occasion offered; though thereby the prejudices of many might be strengthened, the feelings of others hurt, and the sacred cause of truth manifestly injured. Yet so it must have been. Can you persuade yourself that your favourites, Fenelon and Pascal, held those detestable principles, which you unblushingly impute to their religious belief?

Nothing is more surprising than that you protestants should be so utterly ignorant, as you really are, or seem to be, of our tenets; when we all, whatever be our country, think alike, and our catechisms and books of instruction lie open before the world. The bishop of Durham, in a late charge to his clergy, among a variety of false imputations, dared to assert, that for the basest purposes, we had suppressed the second commandment, though the first catholic child he met, had he questioned him, could have shewn the folly of the assertion.

Digitized by Google

And yet I have no doubt the numerous clergy who were present, all believed that, on this and other points, his lordship was speaking truth. Is it then, that you secretly fear that your boasted reformation, the source of some little good, and the source of many ills, cannot safely be maintained, unless all those charges against our faith be obstinately adhered to, on the supposed truth of which that great defection originally commenced, and was continued? I must believe this to be the policy of your proceedings; because however clearly, by our lives and the evidence of facts, any charge be refuted, it is not for that relinquished, but returns again and again. Thus the Bishop of Durham, though one of our catechisms was put into his hands, will continue to assert that we have suppressed the second commandment. You copy from one another, without taking the smallest trouble to look for truth where alone it can be found. Is this honest, honourable, or Christian-like? Is it, in a serious inquirer, any proof of that *consistency* which you so properly recommend?

To state the real tenets of Protestants is a very different task; for where shall we find them, when no one can be sure that any two of you, even in what are called *essentials*, think alike? The anarchical principle of *private judgment*, the key-stone of the Reformation, lets every man loose from authority, and tells him to draw his religion from the scriptures, as, by the light of his own understanding, he shall interpret them. This it is which has filled this country with so many sects, and must continue

Digitized by Google

so to do. Luther, your great apostle, (how unlike to the men of Galilee!) established and used it for his own purpose, and when that was gained, would most willingly have sunk it in the ocean. And so, I believe, would your establishment of this country. I know that every man is free to join you, or any other society; but the more he thinks for himself, and rejects all external authority, the stricter, it appears to me, is his adherence to the above principle, and consequently, the truer Protestant he is. All formularies, such as your thirty-nine articles, obviously subvert the principle, and annul your liberty.

And now, Madam, can you sincerely believe, that your church, cooped up within the narrow precincts of this island, not admitted by a large portion of its inhabitants, and not united, by any bond of faith or discipline, with any other Christian society on the earth, is that church, which the apostles were commissioned to found, when their master sent them into the world, "to preach the gospel to every creature;" teaching them to observe "all things whatsoever he had commanded;" and promising to "be with them alway, even to the end of the world;" that church, which in the creed you profess to call *catholic*? How ill, truly, has an island been chosen for the seat of this church. And how can you reconcile the principle of *private judgment*, which allows every man to choose for himself, with that terrible denunciation of our Saviour, that "he that believeth not," his gospel, manifestly *as* he had taught it to the apostles "shall be damned?"

When it is considered, how deeply-rooted your

Digitized by Google

prejudices are, and that every English Protestant, whatever be his persuasion, is, from his cradle, taught to believe, that his religion is alone enlightened, and his morality alone pure, while that of Catholics is a mass of absurdity and impiety, I am disposed to make many allowances for the ignorant and the weak-minded, and all those, whose condition of life affords not time nor opportunity for inquiry. But to *you* I cannot be so conceding. Let me then request, before you appear at that tribunal where the secrets of the heart will be revealed, that you will review the grounds of those opinions, which you have imbibed against us, and not presume, that confidence in your own belief, without the good work of charity towards others, will insure salvation. Mr. Tyrrel was rather this way inclined.

It was not my intention to have said so much, but for what I have said I make no apology. One word more; when again you censure our doctrines, have the goodness to drop the insulting words, *Papist, Popery, Romanist,* fit only for the Bishop of Durham and Dr. ——. They are no longer admitted *dans la bonne societé.* I had written so far, when I took up your second volume, and finished it. The lessons you continue to give, are all good, and the doctrines such as every Catholic, necessarily *as such,* admits. But did you not know this? And if you knew it, under what impression could you say, that, in practising *abstinence* we required no concominant *devotion;* that we were satisfied with the *outward observance,*

Digitized by Google

without any *interior* act; that when we pretended *sorrow for sin*, it was without any *design* of forsaking it, and that, at the time, we entertained a *fixed resolution* of returning to it, meaning by a temporary forbearance, to increase the *relish?*— Let me put it to your conscience: Are you not shocked, on the review, to know that you could impute such tenets to any society of Christians, even to that society, the most ancient and extended of any, whose admirable works of morality you must have read, and to the lives of many of whose professors, celebrated for wisdom and piety, you could not have been a stranger? But with such tenets, no morality, no piety, not a spark of religion could consist. The Newgate Calendar would be alone fit to record their names.

Thus the question stands: You and the Methodists whom you oppose, read the Scriptures, and expound them, as in the sufficiency of your judgments, it shall seem best. We, having received the same scriptures, receive also on all points of faith and morals, that sense or interpretation of them which, by the learning and piety of ages, has been delivered down to us. I ask you: which method is most rational, most humble, and most secure, as leading to that meaning, in which the word of God was originally committed to writing.

I am, Madam, with great respect,

Your obedient humble servant,

JOSEPH BERINGTON.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. More to the Rev. Joseph Berington.

Barley Wood, 1809.

REVEREND SIR,

It has been my lot to be frequently attacked. It has been my practice never to defend myself. I should not now have troubled you with an answer, did I not feel it necessary to correct the misapprehension on which you ground your resentment.

In the passage of 'Cœlebs,' page 123, it has been obvious to several persons whom I have consulted since I had the honour of your letter, that the expression—'Why this is retaining all the *worst* part of popery,' evidently meant that there was also a *good* part which she had rejected. 'The worst part,' which she had retained is expressed by the term 'abstinence;' the good part which she omitted is said to be 'devotion.' The 'outward observance' is the thing censured, because it is disjoined from 'the interior humiliation' which is not only implied but plainly expressed in words.

This I declare was my meaning. At the same time, now it is pointed out to me, I am equally ready to confess that the latter part of the sentence, which in my mind had no particular reference to Catholics, is not sufficiently guarded, but as it stands *does* seem to form a close to the foregoing sentence. This I shall obviate in future by putting a full stop after the word 'humiliation,' and shall begin the following sentence thus:—'*It is* superadding,' &c.

Digitized by Google

In this plain letter I neither intend compliment nor controversy. I honour good men whatever be their religious persuasion, but I honour their virtues without adopting what appears to me to be their errors. I am too zealous in my own faith not to admire zeal in the opposite party. I can pity that want of charity in you of which I am so mercilessly accused by you, though I doubt not your intention is as pure as your language is acrimonious.

It is true, Sir, I am not unacquainted with your best divines. After near twenty years' search, I have put myself in possession of almost all those excellent authors *Messieurs de Port Royal.* In no writers have I found a more exalted devotion. Pascal, Nicole, Saint François de Sales make also a part of my little library. On the other hand I have perused with profit and pleasure, Bossuet, Bourdaloue, Massillon, &c. You yourself, Sir, have taught me to admire St. Bernard. My strong objection to some of your doctrines by no means interferes with my cordial respect for those good men who hold them.

I fear I am falling into the common error of those who fancying that they are undervalued, are led to overvalue themselves. It would better become any other than myself to tell you that when the emigrant clergy of France took refuge in this country, our house at Bath was for many winters constantly open to as many as resided there. They were cheerfully received at our table, and no religious altercation ever took place between us.

Digitized by Google

With still more reluctance I feel myself called upon to add that I was a warm, though unworthy coadjutor of the London Committee in their cause; and the profits of a slight pamphlet in answer to Dupont, about £240,—were assigned to those conscientious exiles. I lamented then that it was so little, and I lament now that the asperity of your accusation has driven me to the painful necessity of saying any thing that savours of vanity or boasting.

I have no motive in this brief answer, but to express my concern if I have offended against Christian charity, and to ask your pardon if I have unintentionally offended a man of piety and learning. On cool reflection, I think you will not be altogether satisfied with the harshness of your letter. Be assured, however, that no misconceptions on your part, no acrimony in the expression of those misconceptions will diminish the respect with which

I am, Reverend Sir,

Your very obliged,

H. More.

From Mr. Berington to Mrs. H. More.

Buckland, near Farringdon, 1809.

Madam,

The misconception of the obnoxious passage, as it appeared to me, in your 'Cœlebs,' has gratified me not a little, because it has drawn from you the acknowledgment, that, what you deem 'the worst part of popery,' is the *inconsistency* of some persons

Digitized by Google

among us, who disregarding the *spirit*, are satisfied with the *letter*, or outward observance of the law. They abstain or fast without devotion, &c. I hastily thought, that you alluded to tenets, because I could not be ignorant, that, among the many charitable charges brought against the professors of my religion, no one is more common, than that, in the general tenour of our lives, we copy the maxims of the Pharisees. But then I see not, in that meaning of your words, why papists should be particularly censured, as, I fear, other Christians must too often fall under the like reproach. Let that pass. Now, why may not the passage, in future, stand thus? 'This is retaining all the worst part of popery. Here is *its* abstinence without *its* devotion; *its* outward observance without *its* interior humiliation.' To this you can have no objection. The misconception, I assure you, was not voluntary. You construct a sentence of three members, with one governing subject, which is *popery*, and yet say, as you now do, that the third member, in your mind, had no reference to the subject that governs it. This, surely, is very odd. Agreeably to the canons of composition, I formed my conclusion from a connected view of all the parts. In this, you say, I erred. Allow me, however, to add, that, had you written many such passages, your fame could not have been what now it deservedly is. Rather therefore expunge the whole, as containing no sense, or as containing a sense which, in your mind, the words should not convey.

And now, Madam, can you be surprised, under-

Digitized by Google

standing the passage, as I could not avoid understanding it, and combining with it the thousand malevolent reflections which every day and hour insult our feelings, that I should have expressed myself with *acrimony?* Meekness itself must feel irritation. For three hundred years you have been reviling us, and we, in all forms of speech, have repelled your charges, declaring them to be utterly false, and referring you to our catechisms and books of public instruction. Nothing avails: on the next day, the same dish is served up. We charge you with wilful misrepresentation. This, you exclaim, is *uncharitable:* that is, you may in charity revile, and we may not, in charity, defend ourselves. Even foreign universities are teased with your follies, that you may learn from them, forsooth, what English catholics believe! Our solemn asseverations are not entitled to any credit; and when we have taken the oaths which you exact from us, we are impudently told, that oaths cannot bind us, though, at the time, you are aware, that, for centuries, awed by the sacred character of oaths, we have submitted, and still submit, to the most grievous privations. We do not ask you to believe our doctrines; we only modestly request, that you will allow us to know what our own belief is. To this you refuse your assent; as if our tenets, scattered through a thousand brains, and guided by no rule, were as varying and unstable as your own. In the midst of these irritating absurdities, I candidly repeat to you, that it is my conviction, you are, many of you, conscious that your reformation cannot

Digitized by Google

stand on its own merits, and that, if the charges, even the silliest charges, against us, be relinquished, the sandy edifice must fall.

Yourself, Madam, having read the works of those great and good men, whom you mention, cannot possibly entertain against us the disgusting prejudices of the high and low in your church. You must be convinced, that we admit no tenet, which does not, agreeably to our rule of faith, rest on the highest authority; no principle, which does not tend to moral improvement, and inculcate solid piety.

At the risk of being thought irreclaimably uncharitable, I must conclude by the frank confession, that after the 'coolest reflection,' I am not in the least 'dissatisfied' with what you call the 'harshness' of my last letter. The passage of your book richly deserved it, and even more. But, with equal truth, I can declare, that I entertain the highest opinion of your talents, and the sincerest esteem of your many excellent qualities. These I have long known, as I have also known, how kind you and your family were to the French emigrant clergy. Learn only to surmount some prejudices, and to be just to us. I am, with real respect, Madam,

Your very obedient and humble servant,

JOSEPH BERINGTON.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. H. More to W. Gray, Esq.

Barley Wood, August 14, 1809.

MY DEAR SIR,

I cannot easily tell you how sensibly I feel your very kind and flattering attentions to me, as well in your very friendly letter, as its acceptable accompaniments. I have so many separate favours to acknowledge, that I should never have finished were I to enlarge upon each. I must however set them all aside till I have first thanked you and Mrs. Gray for that favour which I do not account the smallest—your very kind, but too short visit. It was one of the few visits of which I can with strict truth regret the shortness, having, since your sudden and brief apparition been so overdone with a succession of company, that I have sometimes cried out with Cowper,

'O for a lodge in some vast wilderness!'

Yet an inhabitant of a great town like York might fancy our lone cottage sufficiently solitary. I thank you particularly, dear Sir, for the trouble you have taken in procuring for me the interesting circumstances preceding Mr. Burgh's death. They gave me heart-felt satisfaction; more indeed than even stronger evidences from a man of another cast of character would have done. They seem marked by the simplicity and godly sincerity, which will add to the satisfaction I shall feel in placing his portrait,

Digitized by Google

(so kindly presented by you) among my worthies. If I am perfectly enchanted with the exquisite representation of your cathedral, what should I be in seeing the edifice itself? The engraving is really delightful, and I set a high value on it for its intrinsic merit, as well as for all the interesting associations which will naturally present themselves to my mind as often as I look upon it: among these, the recollection of the kind and Christian friends from whose hands I received it, will not be the least gratifying. You will be glad to hear that all came in perfectly good order. As to the little rustic temple, which had the good fortune to please you, I have not the vanity to think it will ever be engraved. Perhaps there would be still greater vanity in sending as a substitute, (whenever it may come out,) an engraving of an insignificant portrait, the publication of which I have long resisted. I shall not forget, if that should happen, the direction to Mr. Clarke. I hope I did not say anything, in the hurry of the conversation to which you refer, which could be construed into disrespect to Mr. Overton, whose book I considered as possessing very great merit. Where that is the case, I make no drawback of esteem and admiration for a shade or two of difference in opinion. I have such a propensity to admire whatever is really good, (not only in the execution, but in the intention,) that I may sometimes appear a little inconsistent in warmly liking books, the authors of which dislike each other: this I conceive is one of the pleasures one gains by being moderate, which I profess to be, by

Digitized by Google

holding a middle place between two valuable descriptions of writers of opposite sentiments, each, I doubt not, strenuously seeking to promote the glory of God, and the best interests of mankind, though by means differing according to their different views. While I think a Christian writer should on no account temporize or flatter, or concede the smallest particle of truth, yet meekness and charity, and forbearance, do so much form a part of the *religion*, as they did of the *character* of Christ, that I always lament when I see good men ably defend Christian doctrines with a spirit not altogether Christian. Resentment is often the infirmity of noble natures, who justify their severity by its being exercised, not in their own cause, but in that of their Redeemer; I should however be glad to see this temper monopolized by the intolerant school of Warburton, for in their hands right too often appears to be wrong, by their supercilious mode of defence, and still more virulent mode of attack. Mr. —— has certainly laid himself open to criticism in many parts, and I think has particularly erred in not drawing a broad line of discrimination between the truly excellent (a large, and, blessed be God! an increasing body) and the superficial, of the evangelical clergy.

I have not seen the Christian Guardian, indeed I take no delight in controversy. To see others angry has such a tendency to make me angry, that I am afraid of getting my temper soured, and my heart hardened, by dwelling much on what even good people say against each other. It will be the

Digitized by Google

glory of a better world, that the passions and prejudices, and different views, which alienated good men from each other on earth, will all be done away, and perfect love and harmony be the consequence of perfect light and knowledge. Perhaps, my own worthless self having been so frequently the object of attack has been of use to me in my judgment of others. It has certainly been of use to myself, in advancing the tranquillity and acquiescence of my own mind, under almost every species of assault. I have never written, and (by the grace of God) I never *will* write, one line in my own vindication, though Mr. Cumberland in his last Review talks of my 'suckling babes of grace, and 'making *hell broth*;' advises the bishop against a book which is intended to overturn the church; that the deepest mischiefs lurk in every page of 'Cœlebs;' and as the book is in many hands, he feels it his duty to say, '*Caveat Emptor.*' My dear Sir, shall I not pity the poor man on the borders of fourscore, who *could* write such a criticism after having written a poem called '*Calvary?*' Alas! for poor human nature, that he has not forgiven, at the end of thirty years, that in my gay and youthful days a tragedy of mine was preferred to one of his which perhaps better deserved success.

With what delight do I turn from these petty grievances, to the information you gave me, of the flourishing state of religion, not only in your neighbourhood, but in your *cathedral.* This is indeed a deep cause for thankfulness. For the

Digitized by Google

character of Mr. Richardson I feel the highest reverence. He seems to have been an instrument singularly honoured—the sun of no inconsiderable system.

It is a very rare event for me to write so long a letter; I will only add my very kindest remembrance to Mrs. Gray, in which my sisters, especially Martha, cordially join.

Pray for me, my dear Sir, that I may be more detached from the world, more spiritually-minded, less engrossed by the things of time and sense, which my judgment despises, but which absorb too much of those affections which are due to superior and eternal things. What unspeakable consolation it is that I have a better righteousness than my own to trust to! May I trust to it more entirely, for I am sure there is no other trust! Believe me,

With real respect and esteem,
Your greatly obliged
and faithful servant,
H. More.

From Mr. Stephen to Mrs. H. More.

Serjeant's Inn, London, 1809.

My dear Madam,

A confidential communication from Mr. Wilberforce has released me from the dilemma in which I stood between gratitude on the one hand, and a sense of propriety on the other. I am no longer unable to thank you for an obliging and very valu-

Digitized by Google

able present, of which I had before concluded you to be the author, but which I could not acknowledge, without imposing on you a necessity, (supposing the fact to be so) of expressly or tacitly admitting what you desired to conceal.

Allow me to offer you my opinion, that there can no longer be any sufficient reason for such concealment. The work will promote those great ends to which your other labours have been consecrated, without diminishing a reputation, which for the sake of those ends, ought to be maintained. No allowance will ever be required for a state of health, which excites in every friend who has the pain to witness or hear of it, surprise that you should be able to prosecute your literary labours at all.

In saying this, I rely not on my own poor judgment only, but on the judgment and taste of a majority of those few whose opinions I have had opportunity to learn, and also upon the unsoundness of those reasons for dissent which I have heard on the other side.

The fact is, that your plan as to the mode of publication, unless you wished to draw forth adverse criticism in private, was very disadvantageous. By sending it to your private friends, and letting none of them into the secret, curiosity was not only excited, but a contest for the palm of superior sagacity provoked. Junius's Letters, or Chatterton's Poems, hardly occasioned more curious research or eager controversy in public, than Cœlebs soon did in private; at least in a certain circle.

Now the majority, from the first, confidently

Digitized by Google

pronounced on the internal evidence, that the work was yours, and their opponents wisely thought that the best way to prove the contrary, was to discover *faults* in it. That species of human labour has at least one recommendation; it never loses its end. Some faults were found, and I doubt not to the honest conviction of the finders. It is a confession of the fallibility of my own judgment, for which I have been sometimes stared at, and sometimes laughed at, that I have scarcely ever argued the case of a client, without thinking him in the right, or at least not clearly in the wrong, even when I have had all the evidence previously before me. Let a man invent arguments with a view to persuade others, and he will at least convince himself.

But however this may be, the objections in themselves appear to me, and to much better tastes than mine, either perfectly groundless, or too slight to be put in the scales for a moment against the general character of the work.

The only fault, in short, that I think worth the trouble of correcting, if it could be done in a future edition, is one which I discovered myself; which you will own, makes me a most *impartial* judge of its reality and importance, especially considering the confession I have just been making, and the fact which I must further confess, that it served me for an argument on my own side of the controversy.

I said, this work is plainly the production of a lady, and a single lady, and one whose confidantes, if they have seen the manuscript, are all of the

Digitized by Google

same description; for here is a flaw in that otherwise highly-finished model of female excellence, Mrs. Carlton, which could have escaped the notice only of strangers to the conjugal relation, and to the feelings of our own proud sex. This inimitable wife, who sets us all a crying, does not scruple to converse with her religious female friends on the faults of her husband, and she fears having a female confidante in the house with her, lest she should talk of them always!

Now, my dear Madam, I beg you not to suppose that I have so much presumption as to deem myself capable, in any other point, of improving a portrait of female goodness, which has been finished at Barley Wood. But recollect the old story of Apelles, and consider me only as a poor cobler of a *husband*, speaking in the way of his calling. I am sure, also, you will admit that no man is more likely than I to know what belongs to an excellent wife; and if disclosing a husband's faults, even to the most pious, respected, and beloved of female friends, had consisted with that character, I should, I fear, never have been honoured with that present, for which I am now returning thanks.

I cannot conclude without expressing a warm and sincere approbation of the general plan of your work in point of religious utility. It has long appeared to me, that well-planned and well-written works of the novel kind, might be powerful instruments in correcting the irreligious taste and manners of the age, especially in the fashionable world,

Digitized by Google

and among the rising generation. I might, indeed, for the fashionable world, fairly substitute all ranks above the lowest; for in which of them are not novels read with avidity? and in how great a degree do they form the moral sentiments and judgments of the young! The stage, in my opinion, has not a tenth part of their influence; and though that must unavoidably be left in the hands of the many at present, and is from its very constitution in a much greater degree the slave, than the master of the public manners and opinions; not so with novels; and if a fertile invention, sound judgment, and correct religious principle were employed in composing them, I doubt not that a sufficient interest might be given, without admitting any thing that the strictest purity could justly condemn. Indeed you have proved this, though perhaps with less of incident and plot than would be necessary to rival in minds of little intelleotual culture or refinement, the romantic stories of which they are so fond. You have gone as far, I doubt not, as was prudent at first, in so new a line of religious effort; but if the experiment be as successful as I believe it will prove, others, or you yourself perhaps, may be encouraged to venture further, and give us as much of a novel, as may consist with the maintenance of religious propriety in the good characters and right feelings in the reader.

I beg you to offer my best respects to all the ladies at Barley Wood, and to remember me very kindly as well as respectfully to Mrs. Martha More, whom I have the pleasure to know, though not half so

Digitized by Google

well as I wish to do. Believe me, dear Madam, very respectfully and truly,

Your obliged and obedient Servant,

JAMES STEPHEN.

From Sir W. W. Pepys to Mrs. H. More.

Wimpole Street, March 14, 1809.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Your most kind letter, and Cœlebs, which I found on my table at my return to town, are entitled to my warmest thanks; but as I have of late been made quite sick with apologies, in letters printed for the *amusement* of the public, I will not make any for acknowledging so much kindness.

When I tell you that I was delighted and edified with Cœlebs, I say no more than the truth. The discrimination of character and the good tendency of the work would themselves make it worthy of any writer; but the beauty of the language, and the brilliancy of such frequent and always *consistent* metaphors, stamp it for your own. I have not scrupled to declare, every where, that I have not met with such writing as I can produce in Cœlebs, since the days of Burke, unless it be in your own works. As to 'Mathilde,' I was disgusted with the everlasting opposition with which sacred objects are made to combat with human passions; they are brought too *near* to each other. Sensuality and Christian purity may be discussed *abstractedly* in the same page without any offence; but I cannot endure the crucifix and the lover to be brought

Digitized by Google

into the same room; and I remember to have heard our friend Mrs. Chapone express the same disgust. By the way, how much *her* name has risen since the publication of the two small volumes of her letters to Mrs. Carter, &c. There is more *substance*, more *tangible materials* in one of her letters, than in twenty of what are now published as familiar letters; which consist chiefly of inquiries after head-aches and pains in the stomach, or apologies for not having written sooner, what the public would, perhaps, have been equally well satisfied, had they never known to have been written at all. I take a very warm interest in whatever affects the health of my living friends, but I can no more sympathize with the cholic of a person who has been dead for thirty years, than I could feel indisposed by the garlic which disagreed with Horace eighteen centuries ago.

I am glad that poor Lady W—— is near to such a friend as you. Her's, indeed, are such afflictions as require the tenderest sympathy of a friend, but can receive little consolation from any one but the great Comforter. It is in circumstances such as her's, that the inestimable value of religion is duly *felt*. We assent, perhaps, in prosperity, to all the advantages which are said to be attendant upon a religious life, but it is only in affliction that the heart feels the insufficiency of all earthly consolation, and speaks the language which is hardly *understood* while it is at ease, "O God, thou art my God, early will I seek thee, my soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh also longeth after thee, in a barren and dry land where no water is." "Comfort thou

Digitized by Google

the soul of thy servant, for unto thee do I lift up my soul!"

You inquire after the Montagus. I passed two days with them at Sandleford very agreeably this last autumn. The first volume of our friend's letters are coming out, but I quake for their reception, as they were written as early as seventeen years of age. You have heard the current bon-mot, when somebody asked whether Matthew Montagu and Montagu Matthew (in the House of Commons) were the same person. 'No,' replied a man, 'there is as much difference as between a chesnut-horse and a horse-chesnut.'

As to Miss Smith, I was all admiration at what I read about her in Mr. Bowdler's account, but have never seen any of her productions, and am now glad that I have not to lament the loss of her as an acquaintance. My admiration of talents does not decrease from old age, and I often think of an answer which an old uncle of mine once made when I congratulated him on retaining his relish for the Georgics,—'I desire to live no longer than I can retain my relish for poetry and apple-pie!'

I walk much alone when I am in town, and I take great delight in repeating to *myself* the finest passages of Homer which I have formerly committed to memory. The practice of learning by heart all the finest passages of the poets I very much recommend to my children, who (you will be glad to hear) still continue to be every thing I could wish.

From the account of your visitors, you may say

Digitized by Google

with Horace, '*Pauperemque Dives me petit.*' I met with a passage in Warburton's letters which struck me as very wise. 'In your commerce with the great,' he says, 'you should endeavour, if the person be of great abilities, to make him satisfied with *you*; when he is possessed of none, to make him satisfied with *himself*.' The spirit of conversation seems to have fled, and I doubt much whether all our endeavours and apparatus will be able to recal it. One reason, no doubt, of this is, that the events which are passing before our eyes are of such an interesting and gigantic nature, that it would be affectation to talk of ancient wars, when every thing dear to us is at stake, and involved in the present. I remember that finding Lord Lyttleton writing one morning, I said to him, 'So, my Lord, closely employed upon Henry the Second!' 'Henry the Second!' replied he, 'who can think of Henry the Second, when our colonies are all in a flame?' 'Remember,' said he to me, 'that if the French should once become masters of Flushing, this country must take heed to itself.' What would he have said, had he lived to see every port in Europe under the direct or indirect dominion of Buonaparte?

You once said to me, that the events of our time surpassed in magnitude those of every other. Perhaps (with the exception of Columbus,) this may be true; but we have not yet seen the last act of the tragedy. You remember that magnificent image in the 14th chapter of Isaiah, where the downfall of Babylon is predicted. "Hell from beneath is

Digitized by Google

moved to meet thee at thy coming," &c. some parts of which one cannot help thinking, *mutatis mutandis*, may one day be applicable to Buonaparte. How I should like to sit with you, and compare that passage with the famous one in Homer, where Pluto is represented as starting from his throne. But I should be inexcusable, if I were not contented with the singular happiness of having one with me who can relish, in the highest degree, whatever is most excellent in literature.

I am low in my paper, which admonishes me to defer, (with more propriety than the clergyman did who was preaching to the convicts who were to be hanged the next morning,) the remainder of my discourse to some future opportunity.

Adieu, my dear friend,

Yours affectionately,

W. W. PEPYS.

From the Rev. Dr. Magee to Mrs. H. More.

Bath, October 23, 1809.

DEAR MADAM,

This is accompanied by a copy of the new edition of the 'Discourses on the Atonement,' of which I request your acceptance. It is a very inadequate return for the favour which you had the goodness to confer on me by the present of your excellent production of Cœlebs; and derives a part of its value from the quotations it contains from the writings of one of the most accomplished, and at the same time one of the most edifying writers in the

Digitized by Google

English language. That the cause of good taste, of good morals, and of that, which, in addition to its own transcendent excellence, is the truest source and highest consummation of both, religious sentiment, has derived the most valuable support from the female writers of the present day; and that amongst these, and indeed amongst the most distinguished writers of the age, Mrs. Hannah More takes a decided lead, is so clearly the established opinion of all good judges, that it can add but little to the importance of the suffrage, that it has the fullest concurrence of him who, with the greatest respect for her talents and her virtues, has the honour to subscribe himself her

Most obedient
And faithful humble servant,
H. MAGEE.

Mrs. H. More to the Rev. T. Gisborne.

Barley Wood, Nov. 25, 1809.

MY DEAR SIR,

It is to me among the numberless causes of regret with which this world abounds, that the current of life carries you and me such different ways, that we have rarely met, and are, perhaps, likely to meet still less even than we have done. Yoxall lodge is one of those desirable spots to which I shall probably never travel, save in imagination; and yet there are few places to which that busy faculty recurs with more interest. So many of my friends have given me interesting reports of the scenery and the inhabi-

Digitized by Google

tants, that it seems to me as if I had been myself an eye-witness of both. Add to this, that my mind is powerfully drawn thither by writings worthy of any testimony of respect which the church has to bestow, and by reports of a disinterestedness which present an edifying lesson of purity of motive to that church.

If in the volume you had the goodness to send me I should venture to select a favourite, where all are highly valuable, I should, perhaps, name as *pre-eminently* good the sermon which is entitled, 'Justification not attainable by acts of morality.' The doctrine is stated with singular clearness, sense, and precision, and it is a gain to me that I can now direct an inquirer on that important subject, to a discourse where it is so fully stated, and so forcibly illustrated. I have read it several times. That on 'The love of God an inducement to morality,' stands I think the second in degree, and will I am sure be often read. I am certain it cannot be read without much advantage to the serious inquirer.

Of all the holidays in the year, I think I should have preferred assisting at the consecration of the church——

When paradise was opened in the wild.

I envy you your feelings on the happy accomplishment of that great work, and I envy your auditors theirs on the solemn and affecting address with which it was opened. May it please God to make it effectual to the salvation of many! I am pleased,

Digitized by Google

too, that your edifice is a *church*. I do not much love chapels. I have a foolish whim that both chapels and chapel-holders are apt to want something of that aspect of sanctity which seems to belong exclusively to churches, made venerable by long prescription.

I was grieved to hear some time ago, that Mrs. Gisborne had suffered severely by a sad accident. I hope this is happily over, and that your domestic comfort has had no other interruption. For my own part, it has pleased God to restore me to a greater measure of health, than I could reasonably expect after sufferings as intense as they were lasting. To a little tour which I have lately made to the beautiful coast of Devonshire, I attribute, under Providence, my having recovered such a degree of strength, as to have been spending my morning in planting, now in the end of November, after not having breathed the external air at this season for many years.

I beg to be most kindly remembered to Mrs. and Miss Gisborne.

Believe me ever, my dear Sir,
With cordial regard,
Your's, very sincerely,
H. More.

Digitized by Google

From the Rev. Thomas Gisborne to Mrs. H. More.

Yoxall Lodge, Dec. 14, 1809.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Since your favour arrived, I have been considerably occupied. I am desirous to name the circumstance, as being that which has prevented me from thanking you sooner. When a kindness comes unexpectedly, and I may add, undeservedly, there ought not to be any avoidable appearance of neglect, to raise a surmise that the arrival was not welcomed.

I am not using words of course, in saying that your account of the present state of your health gives me cordial pleasure. The pleasure, too, was, like your letter, unexpected. For though I had heard of improvement in general terms, I had not anticipated so high a degree of it. The best preparation I believe, for a Christian use of health, is a Christian endurance of sickness. And if the languid hours of convalescence made the public very deeply your debtors, how much more may not be expected from the alacrity of renovated strength? But I am far from imposing a task upon you, or from wishing you to impose one upon yourself. Walk, plant, enjoy the open air, recruit in every way which it may please God to place within your reach. And when the desire and the season for mental exertion become united, work with moderation, or rather with forbearance.

We hope that you will not always be a stranger

Digitized by Google

to this spot, and that when you see it, you will regard the scenery with a share of the partial approbation with which you regard its inhabitants. Though our woodland honours are defaced, we have yet some noble relics of the ancient forest to produce,—relics which, like ancient medals, rise in value both because they are old, and because they are scarce. You will not like them the less, if they bring to your recollection several of our common friends, and among them the late Bishop of London. I had a note from him, written about a week before he died. On that account alone it would have been interesting: and it was doubly so, because it was imperfect. The hand and the mind seem to have faltered together; and the interrupted, and in itself unimportant sentence, spoke perhaps a louder lesson, than any period which he uttered in his prime. You are highly encouraging in your expressions concerning the large and the little book which you have accepted from me. The completion of our forest church, (I quite enter into your feelings about a church, as distinguished from a chapel, and accord with them,) is a subject to me of joy, mixed, I trust, with much gratitude.

Mrs. G. has now no remaining sensations of the accident, from which she and others had a most merciful deliverance, and is now, with the rest of us, well. The accounts of T—— have been far from comfortable. May it please God to strengthen him. Wilberforce will have given you the details of his Cowperising summer. I have not had them yet, nor have I heard whether the place has sugges-

Digitized by Google

ted a poem. The Bishop of St. David's I cannot be said to know personally; never having seen him since he was obliging enough to introduce himself to me very many years ago. But from reports concerning him, I have been accustomed to regard him with very high respect. With Mrs. G.'s and my daughter's best regards,

Believe me, my dear Madam,

Very truly your obliged,

T. GISBORNE.

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Knox.

Barley Wood, Nov. 30, 1809.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your *lilliputian* epistle, announcing his *brobdignagian* successor, I have received, and perused with no small pleasure, and I hope not without some little profit.

How could you ever doubt whether the 'thirty-three sheets,' which I hope are only delayed, not lost, would interest me? Never entertain such unwarrantable distrusts any more, but take it for granted that your friend has not so defective a taste as to want a relish for your writings, in whatever vein you may indulge;—

From grave to gay, from lively to severe.

Am I not however, acting a little perversely by talking about the letter which I have *not* got, instead of that which I have? Is not this the very spirit of the world, to be declaiming about enjoy-

Digitized by Google

ments which are out of their reach, and neglecting to do justice to the good things which are actually in their possession?

You were so good, however, as to say that you would be contented with a brief acknowledgment of the effect of your letter; and I thank you for saying so, my health being still in so weak a state, that writing much is out of the question with me; and there are many days when I cannot write even a little without extreme pain. I thankfully acknowledge, however, that my sufferings are diminished, and that I am much better on the whole. Though I think my mind was better when my body was worse, and that my attachment to the world was weakened in proportion as I had a nearer prospect of being removed from it.

But if I can write but little, I can, I thank God, read much, now my eyes are improved by the abatement of my fever; of course your agreeable letter could never have arrived at a more welcome period.

I travel with you, in idea, through your whole interesting tour—partake of the vivid, intellectual, enjoyment at Mr. Dunn's—enjoy the piety of another Lyttleton in the person of your Lady —— ——; a piety bursting through obstructions, and struggling with difficulties, which I trust divine grace will enable her triumphantly to surmount. I feel my heart drawn towards this sweet lady from the picture you draw;—who knows whether "the believing wife shall convert the unbelieving husband."

Digitized by Google

What a blessing is that dear Mrs. ——, to the poor by her exertions, to the rich by her example;—for good is catching as well as evil, though the infection is not in the same proportion. Next I enter into the perplexities and doubts of your *tender-conscienced* semi-Protestant; and think you are the very casuist to settle her mind, having fewer prejudices against her old persuasion than others who do not appreciate the good as well as the bad parts of her creed. For my own part, reading as I almost every day do, a portion of Nicole, or some other good Jansenist, I cannot but conceive heaven open to the conscientious Papist. At the same time that I should rejoice to extricate a pious mind from the pains and penalties, the errors and obscurities, the weaknesses and absurdities of their church, I most cordially agree with you that Popery, in spite of its aggregate mass of religious and political mischiefs, has not been without individual instances of the most sublime and exalted piety. Nay, in that part of religion which comes under the name of devotion, *we* on our side should probably be at a loss to produce instances as numerous and as elevated as the Romish, and this may partly be accounted for from their secluded habits and monastic lives. I however, who am a much more secular creature than you are, am of opinion that Christians are not so much required to live *out of* the world as to live *above* it. A hard duty indeed! Yet there is a "victory that overcometh the world." I am glad you speak so favourably of Milner; in spite of his Calvinism there never was a more

Digitized by Google

honest genuine Christian. To be sure he does go often leagues out of his way to lug in justification by faith; which, however true, is not always to the point. But I admire him for the pains he has taken to grovel in the mire and rubbish of the dark ages, to pick out and brush up, here and there, a solitary saint, whom Mosheim had trampled on, or sacrificed to the delight he seemed to feel in presenting the dark side of the church.

I am not at all satisfied with the life of Mrs. Carter, nor much pleased with her Reviewer. Her biographer, in order to do away the *terrors* of her piety and learning, has laboured to make her a woman of the world, and produced no less than five letters to prove she subscribed to a ball; and he respects her fondness for cards, as much as if it was her passport to immortality. Every novel-reading Miss will now visit the circulating library with a warrant from Mrs. Carter. Mrs. Carter was passionately fond of poetry, yet though she lived and flourished with Pope, Thompson, Gray, Collins, Mason, Churchill, Wartons, Cowper, &c. there is not a single criticism; and though she lived with the learned, the book is naked of anecdote. Her opinions of books are confined to Mrs. West's and Charlotte Smith's *novels*. The *mind* is not at all turned inside out. You do not get the least acquainted with her notions. She was my zealous and attached friend and correspondent for near thirty years; I loved dearly her honest correct heart and highly cultivated mind. We differed just enough in our religious

Digitized by Google

views for the exercise of mutual charity. She was a *Clarkist*. Her calm orderly mind dreaded nothing so much as irregularity; she was therefore most strictly high church, and most scrupulously forbore reading any book, however sound and sober, which proceeded from any other quarter. She would on no account have read either Doddridge or Pascal, two sins of which, to her great regret, I lived in the constant commission. These things were always matter of good-humoured debate between us. She vindicated herself in this narrow prejudice on the ground of her humility—that she had so low an opinion of her own firmness that she dared not venture out of the strict line which she had chalked out to herself. As some of her notions, however, were not exactly conformable to those of the church of England, it was not quite consistent with her fine sense to prescribe to herself such rigid limits. The exactness of her morality was exquisite, but her dread of enthusiasm cooled and cramped her genius and spirit.

Lord Barham says, in a letter just received, 'As to politics, they are now far beyond *my* reach!' I think you would be gratified to see another letter by the same post, from my valuable old friend, Lord Gambier. Your own Chrysostom might have written it, so deeply serious is its spirit.

I must end, but not without sending kind regards to Miss Ferguson. My sisters, who are most of them great invalids, desire their best remembrances. Poor Patty is worked to death in supplying my

Digitized by Google

lack of service. Adieu, my dear Sir, with cordial wishes for your health, peace, and comfort,

I am

Your's very sincerely,

H. More.

From Mr. Stephen to Mrs. H. More.

Lincoln's Inn, London, Dec. 8, 1809.

My dear Madam,

I am much honoured as well as gratified by your kind and obliging letter. My dear Mrs. Stephen and I are rejoiced to have such good accounts of your health, and it would require little persuasion notwithstanding to induce her to pay you a visit at Barley Wood, if in her power. I say *notwithstanding*, for you know she is famous for her penchant for sick rooms, and that when her friends want to see her, they have only to tie up their knockers, and send for the apothecary. For my part, I am committed prisoner to this sooty atmosphere, (except that I have the liberty of the rules, which extend to Clapham and Kensington,) till August next; but I should neither be surprised nor sorry, if you should see Mrs. Stephen at Barley Wood before that period. She spoke of such an excursion more than once last spring and summer, but some obstacle of duty, or supposed duty, always intervened.

I should hope, however, that we are likely to see you ere long in this neighbourhood. Surely you have not renounced the habit of occasional visits to

Digitized by Google

your London friends? Not for their sake only, but for that of the public, you should now and then take a peep at this great and busy scene, that you may better know how to treat of our faults and follies, by observation of the newest modes. This is the more necessary and desirable now that you have happily begun to prescribe for us in the more palatable way, and in such a way as has multiplied your patients: the laboratory at Barley Wood may prepare the medicine as before, but as you have found the way of giving it in comfits and preserves, the taste of the day is material. I speak in the hope that 'Cœlebs' will not always be left like a pilgrim in an African forest, to be followed and surrounded by monkey-imitators, without a companion from the same rational stock to support him in his pious enterprise, and mark out more clearly to genuine followers the path he has happily opened. The opinion I gave of the probable utility of that work has since been abundantly confirmed. I need not tell you this, for your bookseller's authority must be ample and conclusive as to the popularity of the work, and it is, I think, impossible to doubt that the good produced by it bears a more than ordinary proportion to the number of readers; most of whom 'Cœlebs' has withdrawn from the trash of a circulating library or from still worse subjects of amusement. The good he does, therefore, is negative as well as positive. But the chief consideration is that you not only loosen, perhaps wholly remove, fatal prejudices against religion in the mind of many amiable

Digitized by Google

persons, but present a clear idea of Christianity, and an inviting picture of Christian life, to many who without such a work would, humanly speaking, have had no possible chance of ever forming just conceptions of either.

Perhaps this most valuable tendency of the work is not duly appreciated by those who, from their early years, have had the blessing of hearing the genuine doctrines of the gospel sensibly inculcated, and of seeing in real life the practical fruits of those doctrines among persons of their own rank in life, and their own scale of intellectual culture. But how few, comparatively, of the learned or polite, have possessed such advantages?

Sermons and didactic works on religion in general, if they could impress like pictures of living individual piety, are rarely read by those who most want their assistance. To the fashionable and gay, they are, generally speaking, as foreign as an unknown tongue. This, it must be granted, is culpable ignorance, yet who does not wish to remove it. We translate the scriptures for the Welch and the Hindoos, and why not translate practical religion into polished life, for the poor sons and daughters of fashion, and the lovers of romances and novels? The barriers of habit and prejudice are hardly less difficult to pass than the seas and deserts which our missionaries traverse for the conversion of Pagans.

I trust, then, my dear Madam, that looking to that object which infinitely transcends the worth of human praise, usefulness to the souls of your

Digitized by Google

fellow creatures, you will not be deterred by the malice of some critics, or the bad taste or false views of others, from proceeding in the new path you have opened, provided your health and strength shall permit your doing so.

I should be much surprised if the men by whom our reviews are for the most part conducted, were not very angry at Cœlebs. A literary infidel may tolerate a volume of sermons, or religious tracts for the poor, but if he is to be elbowed thus by religion in the walks of imagination and taste; if scholars and fine gentlemen, as well as paupers, are to take the cross at your bidding, and piety to be reconciled with good-breeding and elegant manners, it is time for the poor sceptical critic to look well to his own future estimation in society, and to guard while he yet can, his own peculiar domains. But I trust you will leave the public to settle the account with these gentlemen, and indulge us with another novel in the same spirit, but as much more novelish as you please.

I wish it were in my power to raise your spirits a little as to public affairs, but my own views of them, whether I look at home or abroad, are very gloomy. The best point in the prospect is our commerce. I am well informed that the commercial revenue has exceeded, during the last three quarters of a year, what it was estimated at in the last budget, by full three millions. Our exports far exceed all former example, and our import trade is so great, that not only are the New Docks, and their enormous warehouses, full to overflowing,

Digitized by Google

but every private warehouse on the river-side, from Blackwall to Scotland Yard, has been put in requisition by our merchants. It is almost a literal truth that we possess the whole maritime commerce of the world, for scarcely a sail is to be found on the ocean but under British colours, or navigated under British licences. Such are the fruits of a system which we are told was to ruin our trade; for it is not true that the principles of that system have been departed from. The changes in the practical application of them, by the orders in council of the present year, have been only such as the new relations of Spain, Portugal, and other parts of Europe, naturally suggested and required, with such a temporary accommodation to Erskine's unwarranted arrangement with America, as could not be justly withheld.

If commercial and naval greatness could insure the safety of the country in the present dreadful state of the continent, we should have no visible cause of alarm. But I was never one of those who think an invasion and conquest of England impossible, our constitution immortal, or our financial resources not to be exhausted; and therefore I cannot contemplate the awful aspect of the times without uneasiness.

Perhaps it is not the least alarming symptom of national decline that our party spirit, and our frivolity of popular feeling, seem to grow with our dangers. At your distance from London and Oxford, it may not be easily credited that *O. P-ism* at Covent Garden, and the election for chancellor

Digitized by Google

of the university, have ten times more interest than the Spanish war or the Walcheren expedition. They have even superseded the *more important* question of Canning and Castlereagh. Happy those who in these days, or any days, are earnestly seeking a better country.

With kindest respects and best wishes to Miss Martha More, and the rest of the family at Barley Wood, (in which I need not say Mrs. S. if at my elbow, would cordially join,)

I am, dear Madam,
very sincerely, yours,
JAMES STEPHEN.

From Mrs. H. More to Sir William Pepys.

Barley Wood, Dec. 13, 1809.

MY DEAR SIR WILLIAM,

I fear you will not do me justice as to the value I set upon your friendship, and especially upon your correspondence, from visible signs and overt acts. And yet your esteem is one of the few things on earth which I am anxious to preserve, and your letters gratify me more than I can say. But besides that I do not think it fair to break in upon you often, I have this year, I really believe, received more than twice the number, both of letters and of guests, that came to me in any former one; and writing is not now performed with the alacrity of former times.

It is so long since I received your last letter, that if I advert to it, you will have forgotten the

Digitized by Google

circumstances that made it interesting. I hope it has pleased God to preserve to you all those domestic comforts and fire-side enjoyments with which your heart seemed so gratefully to overflow. For myself, I was so over-done with company, (almost all of whom I should have liked individually and separately,) that my good physician sent me off to the sea at the end of September, just as *summer* was beginning. I spent five weeks in exploring the beautiful coast of Devonshire. Exercise, quiet, liberty, and the revival of a few old friendships, sent me home much renovated.

I was very angry with you and the rest of the world, for detecting the author of 'Cœlebs,' through a disguise which I thought impenetrable. I wrote it to amuse the languor of disease. I thought there were already good books enough in the world for good people; but that there was a large class of readers whose wants had not been attended to;—the subscribers to the circulating library. A little to raise the tone of that mart of mischief, and to counteract its corruptions, I thought was an object worth attempting. Commendation and abuse have, I think, been *pretty liberally* dealt out to me. My early foe ——— has kept alive all that rancour which he exerted against me thirty years ago, because 'Percy,' with perhaps less merit, had more success than the 'Battle of Hastings.' Though I am not blind to the faults of my own book, and have always received just criticism thankfully, and adopted it uniformly, yet when 'Cœlebs' is accused of a

Digitized by Google

design to *overturn the church*, I cannot but smile; and I own I felt the sale of ten large impressions in the first six months, (twelve are now gone) as a full consolation for the barbed arrows of Mr. S—— and Mr. C——.

I suppose you know that you are soon to burn your Marmions, and to dislodge your Miltons from their niches, to make way for Wallace, the expected epic, which is to shine upon and to animate us during the frosts of Christmas. One advantage I really think this hero will have over his late Scottish predecessor, is, that his character being real, and I suppose somewhat grounded on historical fact, will excite a livelier interest, especially among the Caledonians. Walter Scott, however possessed one advantage, of which he does not appear to me to have made good use; having no history, or even tradition, to which he was obliged to conform his hero's character, he was at liberty to make him, if not a better man, yet at least a more honourable and interesting rogue.

Among our latest visitors, we have had a poet and a prelate;—B—— the poet of urns and obelisks, and the excellent Bishop of St. David's, who is, perhaps, doing more for the intellectual and spiritual good of his fellow-creatures, than almost any of his contemporaries. He has undertaken the Herculean labour of raising the tone of morals, learning, and piety, in a large Welsh diocese, to which he gives all his time and a large proportion of his income. I cannot speak of

Digitized by Google

bishops, without recurring to the very severe loss I have sustained in the death of my zealously-attached friend at Fulham. I had spent the month of May with him for twenty successive years, and only my want of health prevented my being witness to the closing scene. 'No action of his life became him like the leaving it.' His hope was full of immortality.

I have read only four of a thick octavo volume of sermons which I think extremely striking. The author's name is Skelton. There is admirable sense compressed in remarkably few words; sound logic, and solid piety—I mean as far as I have gone: the work has a high character.

What an unaccountable world do we live in! And how providentially are we preserved out of the general wreck! What bright spots have we to illuminate our gloomy prospects, I mean as far as naval and commercial prosperity go! I had a letter last night from the best authority, which declares that our commercial revenue exceeded, during the last nine months, what it was estimated at in the last budget, by full three millions; that our exports exceeded all former example, and our imports are so great, that all the enormous new dock warehouses are overflowing, so that every private warehouse from Blackwall to Scotland Yard is put in requisition by our merchants. But while our ministers atone for the miserable failure of ill concerted and ill-conducted enterprizes by fighting duels; and while the national frivolity is so excessive, that stupid *O. P.-ism*, and the

Digitized by Google

election at Oxford, swallow up the very remembrance of the Spanish war, and the miseries of Walcheren, I cannot take much comfort when I look at home or abroad. But if there is little support in looking round, there is always much in looking up. "The Lord God omnipotent reigneth," and to those who love and serve him, things cannot go finally ill.

Be better to me than I deserve. Write soon—write much—tell me what books you read. How your excellent young people go on—how Lady Pepys's health is, and whether your own maintains its ground;—whether you have read Lord Valentia; and whether you are in an intermediate state between the two reviews which I have been reading (the British and Quarterly); one of which elevates him, I should suspect above his real standard, and the other depresses him below it.

My best respects to your excellent Lady.

Adieu, my dear Sir William,

Believe me,

from taste, esteem, and affection,

Very faithfully your's,

H. More.

From Mrs. H. More to Mrs. Kennicott.

Barley Wood, 1810.

My dear Friend,

I was absent when your kind letter came, or such was the impression its affecting strain produced on

Digitized by Google

my mind, that I should have answered it immediately. I am but just returned from a little tour among some good and agreeable friends in that beautiful part of Gloucestershire which is near Bristol. I have been rubbing up some of the friendships of my early youth, and making, I had almost said, *too many* new ones. I have been visiting with a soothing sort of feeling the scenes where we used to *gipsey*, and traced many a spot where I had picked dry sticks to boil the tea-kettle under a shady oak, or broiled a mutton chop on knitting needles. The companions of these harmless rambles are all dead, while our sickly family are all alive! One of my pleasantest visits was to Blaise Castle, where I mused on the spot over which our dear Bishop of London rode on his little horse.

Poor Mr. Windham! In this day of scarcity we could not afford to lose his brilliant talents. I greatly admired them, though I was not always satisfied with the objects to which they were directed. While great men are alive and flourishing, we think of little but the splendour of their abilities; —as soon as they are no more, how does the bright gold become dim, and with how little comparative delight do we reflect on anything connected with their talents, except the application of them! I think much of him, and of his many excellences. I hope he made his peace, through the Prince of Peace, with that Being who had given him so great a responsibility.

Pray, when you see the Bishop of Durham, express my gratitude to him, for his kindness in

Digitized by Google

sending me his very admirable, informing, and convincing pamphlet on the popish business. I learnt some things from it which I did not know before, and was confirmed in some which I did. I thought it would be doing his Lordship a favour *not* to write to thank him. How overwhelmed must *he* be with letters, when such a humble creature as I am sometimes ready to cry at the multitude which I really cannot answer, beside being ruined with postage.

Cadell and Davis have sent me my account. The cost of printing, paper, &c. is exorbitantly increased, and I had near £5000. to pay for expences, besides all the booksellers' profits; partly in consequence of my having given *more for* the money than any book that has lately appeared;—as you know, books do not sell in proportion to their intrinsic value, but to their size. I was vexed to see Miss Smith's fragments, excellent as they are, and Mrs. Montagu's letters, charged two shillings a set more than 'Cœlebs,' though there is not much above half the paper and letter-press. I do comfort myself that I have sold an honest, if not a good book. Notwithstanding these disadvantages, you will be glad to hear that I *cleared within the year* £2000. to be paid by instalments, £500. a quarter. I have had the first quarter. That Walter Scott's two guinea poem should produce £2000. is not strange; but that a trumpery twelve shilling one, so cavilled at and abused, too, should produce the same sum so soon, was what I had no reason to expect. The copyright is still in my hands.

Digitized by Google

This letter was written so far as soon as I came home. I brought with me a cold and sore throat, which sent me to my bed, from which I have just risen; and the first thing I do is, to take up my pen to finish this scrawl. I had two more teeth drawn as I passed through Bristol, which make fourteen in little more than a year. Alas!

My bilious complaints have mended with the weather, so there is no talk of Cheltenham. Dr. Lovell wants me to go *somewhere* in the autumn, if only to escape the inroads of company. In such an uncertain world, and in so sickly a family, I cannot plan anything. The north I have never seen—I should like to be the *Lady of the Lake*; but shall hardly get so far. Sir J. and Lady C. Graham, who have been here, press me to go to Netherby, where they tell me my chamber window would open on Gretna Green. But *au jour la journée!* I endeavoured to make my views short. I wish it were not so difficult to live in near views of the eternal world. In point of *retirement*, I have not gained much by giving up London and Bath. My eyes, I thank God, are better.

How is dear Mrs. Porteus?

The good Bishop of St. David's paid us a second visit. He drove over from Bath to breakfast, and as it was Easter-Monday, he desired after breakfast to read the whole church-service to us. It was so primitive, and so like all he does, it pleased me! With guests and work-folks, we mustered a decent congregation.

Digitized by Google

Do let me hear from you a little oftener. How my heart has ached for the king.

Adieu, my dear friend,

Believe me, with true affection, sincerely yours,

H. More.

Extract of a letter from Mrs. H. More to J. Harford, Esq.

Barley Wood, 1810.

Have you read the 'Lady of the Lake?' it is full of beauty. The descriptive parts are exquisite. There is more of character and incident than in Scott's other poems. Ellen is the only woman whom he has ever made interesting. She is amiable, frank, and pleasant. There is also an interesting maniac, who, I think, comes next to Richardson's 'Clementina;' still there is wanted in all Scott's poetry, that without which no poem can cling about the heart and affections, I mean a due admixture of moral, or rather of religious reference. The former of these it is which makes the charm of Beattie and of Goldsmith; and the union of both in Milton and Cowper, captivates while it exalts the soul of every reader who has a soul.

As soon as Patty is able, I must go to Bristol for a few hours on business, and, if possible, as a point of duty, see that poor lady I mentioned to you, whose head has been sadly injured by some unsound religionists. Best regards at Blaise Castle.

Your's very sincerely,

H. More.

Digitized by Google

From the Rev. J. Venn to Mrs. H. More.

Clapham, April 30, 1810.

MY DEAR MADAM,

It has given me the highest pleasure, and I am sure it will afford you an enjoyment of the purest kind, to know that your earnest labours in the best of causes have not been in vain. How far indeed they have been successful, you will never know till that great day when all the good which we have been the means of doing, (and which is so wisely now hidden from our sight) will be revealed; when all the happy effects of the prayers, cares, and labours of the righteous will be made known to their own astonishment, as well as to the universal admiration of the sentence which they will receive; and when, on the other hand the dreadful effects of the sinner's crimes, and the wide-spreading devastation occasioned by them, will display the righteousness of the doom passed upon him. But I think you must already have known far more than enough to recompense you for all the calumnies occasioned by the Blagdon controversy, and all the pain which for a time you suffered from the most malicious and groundless aspersions.

The case which has suggested these reflections, is that of a poor man in this village, who lately died in a most penitent and happy state, which he owed entirely to the perusal of your little tracts. He was a driver of one of the stage coaches in this place, was very drunken and profligate, and never

Digitized by Google

attended a place of worship; but beginning to sink under the injuries which dram-drinking did to his constitution, one of our benevolent visitors of the district in which he lived, called upon him, and left with him a parcel of tracts. 'Sorrowful Sam' was the one which particularly struck him, and was blessed, I think I may justly say, to his entire conversion. His illness was long and lingering, but he gave every satisfaction which could be desired of a solid change of heart; and upon his death he earnestly desired that a copy of that tract might be given to each of his children, with a solemn charge to them to read it over every month. His widow was also very deeply impressed, and has become now, I hope, truly religious; and thus has a whole family, probably, been rescued from ruin by that excellent tract. It was the production, I believe, of your sister Sally, who, I am sure, will rejoice in this account.

I am also happy to find that 'Cœlebs' is equally beneficial in the higher circles. The aunt of a lady in this neighbourhood, whose excellent niece suffered much restraint and hardship, (I must not call it persecution) in consequence of her seriousness, is now, from having read 'Cœlebs,' no longer prejudiced, and herself reads the books which her niece recommends. I have heard also of another lady, within a mile or two of this place, who has received similar benefit. These instances have occurred just by; but I have heard of many at a distance, where still more beneficial effects have been produced.

Digitized by Google

Now that the idle clamours against the work have been silenced, and that the public approbation has been testified by a sale, I believe absolutely unparalleled, you may expect to receive here also a recompence for your sufferings on this score; for my own part, I can truly declare that I look upon it as one of the most useful works which was ever written, for the purpose which it was intended to answer. Most truly do I thank you for your kind present of it, which I am truly ashamed to think that I did not acknowledge as soon as the author was certainly known; but delay in writing letters propagates itself, till at length what was only deferred for a day, or a week or two, becomes impossible to be done, because it ought to have been done so long ago. The instance I have related above has, however, broken the chains by which I was held, and I determined at once to write and confess my own shame, and congratulate you upon the good you do.

For my own part, alas! I continue useless—my harp has long been hung upon the willows—and I have not been able to preach, I believe, ten times during the last fifteen months. Sometimes my voice appears to recover its usual tone, but the exertion of preaching soon destroys again my reviving hopes. However, it is God's holy will, and I submit; it is his correction, and I would willingly kiss the rod; it is his punishment, and I deserve it.

I am, dear Madam,

Your much indebted and faithful friend,

J. VENN.

Digitized by Google

From the Bishop of Lincoln to Mrs. H. More.

Buckden Palace, October 5, 1810.

MADAM,

I am highly gratified by the note which I have had the honour of receiving from you this morning. I am very happy that our sentiments coincide in many instances, and I am particularly glad that you approve of my last chapter.

I cannot but take this opportunity of relieving my mind, in some degree at least: I have often reproached myself for not expressing to you my gratitude for your present of Cœlebs. Be assured that I read very few pages before I discovered the author, although I had been positively assured that it did not come from Barley Wood; but as you did not choose to put your name to the book, I thought it would be impertinent in me to write to you, and more especially as I found that your confidential friends were silent upon the subject; and therefore I did not venture to disclose my opinion even to them. Thus far I do not feel any reason to be dissatisfied with myself; but I feel that after I was informed that you acknowledged the work, I ought to have written to you; and for this omission I take shame to myself. May I hope that you will pardon me, and that at this late moment you will allow me to assure you that Cœlebs afforded me the highest satisfaction: not merely the pleasure of reading a book written in a very superior style, with an interesting story, and a just delineation of

Digitized by Google

character; but as I went along, I could not but feel a strong conviction that a work, so excellent in its principles, and so entertaining in its nature, must be in an eminent degree useful, to a class of readers in particular, who seldom take up a book but to derive mischief from it.

I am very sorry that you complain of ill health. We have sometimes the pleasure of hearing of you by our common friends. I beg you to believe that Mrs. Tomline and myself will always feel a sincere interest in every thing which concerns your comfort and happiness. Mrs. Tomline is at present in Lincolnshire, or I should have been charged with her kindest regards to you.

I am, Madam,

Your very faithful and obedient servant,

G. LINCOLN.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER IV.

WHEN it is remembered with what righteous boldness Hannah More, in her younger days, surrounded and caressed by whatever was most dazzling and distinguished, had published her 'Thoughts on the Manners of the Great,' it will not seem extraordinary that as experience matured and established her principles, and her spiritual strength received farther supplies from him who gives us a right judgment in all things, she should have devoted her time wholly and decidedly to the promotion of man's eternal interests; but it may well surprise those who have experienced the fatigue of the brain in the labour of composition,—who have felt the pains of uncomplying thought,—and who have struggled with circumstantial hindrances and interruptions, that the pen of this intellectual lady should have maintained its steady progress in the midst of an overwhelming correspondence, the hourly aggression of visits, and an almost constant state of sickness and suffering.

Digitized by Google

In 1811, she produced a work of two volumes, entitled 'Practical Piety,' which she had begun something more than a year after the appearance of 'Cœlebs.' Having announced it with her own name, the first edition was bespoken while in the press, and it ran on very speedily to a tenth. To be insensible to the testimony to her merit, implied in the success of her efforts, ought not to have been expected even in Hannah More, by those that most admired her; but those who knew her best, were satisfied that the result of her labours most gratifying to her mind, was the demonstration afforded by the great demand for her work, that the prayers with which she had committed it to God, had been answered in the blessing which had made it an instrument of touching and awakening many hearts. Of this she had proof the most convincing, continually coming to her knowledge to the end of her life.

From Mr. Stephen to Mrs. H. More.

Ormond Street, London, April 30, 1811.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I have too long delayed to return my thanks for your kind and very valuable present. The delay has not proceeded from insensibility to the honour of such attentions from you, which expose me much more to the danger of vanity than ingratitude; but I waited first for leisure to express my sense of it in a suitable way, and next because, after having lost some time, I did not like to write merely to

Digitized by Google

acknowledge the casket before I had examined its contents. This indeed is a pleasure which I have not yet been able to exhaust. I have been very closely occupied with parliamentary and official duties, and I set off on an interesting excursion in the Easter week, without remembering to put your books in my trunk. I have read enough, however, to be able to say from experience that the effect of your new work is likely to be such as you most desire. If it does not do much good to the minds of your readers in general, it must be because they do not stand so much in need of impressive religious admonition as I do, or because such impressions are as evanescent with them as they too commonly are with me. If you give, as you prepare us to expect, and as the subject indeed implies, little that is substantially new, you give what is more valuable, —old and most important truths in a new and interesting dress. To change the garb of religious instruction and exhortation is not easy, but is highly useful and important. Nor is it a matter of small account that many who too rarely open a religious book will read a work of *yours*, even on practical piety, lest they should seem to be ignorant of such novelties in the literary world as are sure to engage general attention. A work sent home even from motives like this may do good in the family, and perhaps to the buyer himself.

It was a little against the grain with me to be content with this new gift from your pen, after expecting from it a companion to my friend Cœlebs. I looked for another novel, as I am a true man,

Digitized by Google

when I heard you were again at work; a novel which a Christian might not fear to leave in his parlour, unless from the danger of losing a second reading of it himself, and the good effects of which he might back against a whole volume of sermons. But I see that neither my opinion, nor that of the public at large, nor all the thanks or petitions of your bookseller, can counterbalance with you a few bad tastes that shall be nameless. For my part, I shall receive the bounties of Barley Wood thankfully in whatever shape you please to bestow them; but after opening so new, so fertile, and in my poor judgment, so profitable a vein, in which invention as well as the other powers of your pen might find full employment, you ought not to abandon it as not worth further working; or not at least on the suggestion of any other mind than your own.

That you have still strength of mind and body to labour thus usefully in any way, is a blessing to yourself and others, which may it please heaven to prolong. I need not say that Mrs. S. joins in that prayer. With her and my best respects and kindest remembrances to the whole family circle at Barley Wood,

I am, my dear Madam,
very sincerely and respectfully,
your obliged and obedient servant,
JAMES STEPHEN.

Digitized by Google

From Lord Teignmouth to Mrs. More.

Portman Square, May 28, 1811.

MY DEAR MADAM,

From various causes, which it is unnecessary to detail, I have only had an opportunity within the last fortnight, to read your late publication with that attention which it merited; and I was unwilling to acknowledge my sense of the obligation conferred on me by your present, until I had in some measure appreciated its value. I can now most truly say, that the perusal of it has afforded me the highest gratification, and it will be some proof of the sincerity of this declaration, when I assure you, that I mean to read it again and again, not for gratification only, but for improvement. With this disposition I willingly resign the task of criticism to reviewers, remarking only, that I should have been better pleased to have had four volumes of the same quality instead of two. Judging of others by myself, I feel that we all want to be reminded of our duties, and of our failure in the performance of those duties, especially those which we are every hour required to practise; of our neglect in watching our thoughts, emotions and tempers; of the too predominant indulgence of a selfish disposition and habit; of the absolute necessity of a holy life, and the extensive obligations implied in that expression; and, above all, of the great account which we must one day give. The public is therefore obliged to you, and I cannot but sincerely thank

Digitized by Google

you, for a performance which has supplied so much matter for serious reflection, and self-examination; which has made me think and feel; which has instructed and deeply interested me; and from which by God's grace I hope to derive real benefit. Whilst I see with combined feelings of pity and sorrow, the numerous controversies which issue from the press, I have reason at the same time to rejoice, that it is not unproductive of books of 'practical devotion for the increase of piety and virtue,' and that works of this kind readily obtain a general reception and approbation. You are eminently entitled to applause for your labours in this line: the sentiments in 'Cœlebs' have made an impression on many minds, to which they would have had no access if they had been introduced under a more formal garb; and 'Practical Piety,' which is calculated to instruct the wisest, will, I doubt not, tend to inform many who are both ignorant, and unsuspicious that they are so.

In expressing my feelings with so little reserve, I am aware that I expose myself to a suspicion of flattering, but why should I on this account be silent? Indeed, my dear Madam, I should be gratified, if any thing I have said should tempt you to future exertions for the good of mankind. It is true that we have many excellent manuals of piety and devotion; but the public taste varies, and those productions only which are adapted to it, will stimulate it. Justin well observes, that 'the understandings of men are as the chords of musical instruments; when a string sounds, the strings

Digitized by Google

which are unisons to it, if within proper distance, will vibrate,' and as you possess the talent of adapting your writings to *all* tastes, with very few exceptions, I trust you will continue to exert it, as long as it shall please God to give you health and strength for the work.

In all these sentiments, Lady Teignmouth most cordially concurs. We have both long been invalids, and for myself I can say, that I owe a very severe indisposition, which I have suffered ever since the 25th of January, to application, and which for many weeks precluded the use of my pen, beyond absolute necessity. We have the greater occasion therefore, for a manual of practical piety. A few years at the utmost will determine, whether religion has had 'that influence on our hearts, and on the conduct of our lives' which it ought to have; and as we advance towards the period of our earthly career, we are more disposed to read those books which renew and fortify our conviction of this truth. Your whole performance, and especially the concluding chapter, is well calculated to produce this effect, and to lead to that heavenly meditation which Baxter describes with a pen plucked from an angel's wing. If you have not the passage in your memory, you will thank me for transcribing it from mine.

'Other meditations are as numerous as there are lines in the Scripture, creatures in the universe, or particular providences in the government of the world. But this is a walk to Mount Sion; from the kingdoms of this world to the kingdom of saints;

Digitized by Google

from earth to heaven; from time to eternity; it is walking on sun, moon, and stars, in the garden and paradise of God.'

Lady Teignmouth begs her most affectionate remembrance to you, and we unite in kindest remembrance to Miss P. More and your family. I am, my dear Madam,

Your obliged and sincere,

TEIGNMOUTH.

From the late Lord Barham to Mrs. H. More.

Barham Court, 1811.

MY DEAR AND LONG ESTEEMED FRIEND,

I thank you for your kind and long letter, and am much pleased that 'Practical Piety' has found its way into the great world, although it cannot be expected that it will overtake Cœlebs: the subjects are very different, and though both are exeellent, yet very few like to have their faults so plainly pointed out. My own opinion is, that it is the most valuable and useful of all your works, and will be the means of much serious reflection to many people who have never turned their thoughts to religious subjects. If any chapters struck us more than others, they were the last two of the second volume: but indeed the whole excited our admiration. I am promised the usual visit from Mrs. Porteus in the autumn; I wish you and Patty were in strength to accompany her. Our long uninterrupted friendship is a source of much comfort to me: many and many of those whom I loved and confided in are gone before, but

Digitized by Google

I do not grieve as those without hope. I have lately obtained a great treasure in having Lady Middleton's correspondence with Mrs. Bouverie for many years put into my hands by my daughter. Mrs. Bouverie never had the courage to destroy them. Such an established and faithful friendship I have never read of. To me, who had been so closely connected with the parties, they afford the greatest pleasure, though of a melancholy cast.

I have been altering the church, and making a gallery for ourselves. We gain thirty-five seats, at an expense of more than £300. Our public measures are too tardy to be successful; want of forethought and preparation is the great fault of all administrations, that of Buonaparte excepted. He has however received a check which I hope will tend to the general good of all Europe. The idea of so many lives being sacrificed to the ambition of one monster is heart-breaking; but as we see not to the end, we must be patient. Honesty and application will go a great way in carrying on public business; if these are wanting, all the talents which we hear so much of, will prove vain: I say nothing of religion and virtue, but whoever throws them aside, must have little to expect from Him, who governs even the falling of a sparrow. My health is as usual, good; but I feel a gradual weakness, the natural consequence of declining years: much reason, however, have I to be thankful; my spirits have been always moderate, but equal; and if I have any character it is, moderation in all things. What a wonderful machine is the Bible Society!

Digitized by Google

Many however are still dead to its consequences: too many of the clergy in this neighbourhood are hostile to the unexceptionable work that is carrying on. Kind remembrance to all, and doubly to Patty, from (my much valued friend,)

Yours most affectionately

BARHAM.

From Sir W. W. Pepys to Mrs. H. More.

Wimpole Street, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

The state of my eyes, which is always rather weak, does not afford me a very near prospect of finishing this letter, which, however, I am resolved to begin, if I can do no more than merely thank you for your very kind remembrance of me, in sending me your last excellent work. I have read it with much delight, and much emotion; perhaps I might add, with much envy, for it places your indefatigable exertions in favour of virtue and religion (notwithstanding your frequent indisposition) in such a point of view, that I can find no other consolation for not attempting to imitate them, but the well-founded consciousness of not being able. To pay you compliments upon the brilliancy of thought and expression which occur in every page—upon the beauty and consistency of the metaphors, which are luxuriant (I had almost said) to redundancy; or even upon the intimate and accurate knowledge which you display of the human heart, would be but poor praise in comparison of

Digitized by Google

what you deserve for your zealous and anxious soli citude for the salvation of souls. Whether it be because the impression is more recent, I cannot say; but it strikes me as being the best of all your performances, and as admirably calculated to terrify the wicked, to rouse the negligent, and to keep the most watchful upon their guard. There is, however, an impression which I find it makes upon some of the best and most religious characters, which is, that of despair of ever reaching such unattainable perfection; and a thorough disbelief that the generality of their friends and acquaintances, who have been virtuously and religiously educated, and seem to be in the constant habit of "doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with their God," can possibly be in such a state of reprobation, as to incur the final displeasure of the Almighty, and be destined to everlasting punishment. These are, perhaps, you will say, self-satisfied Christians, and in greater danger, because their eyes are not open to their own corruptions. It is observed also, that you seem to have forgotten that our Saviour, when he says, that "he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance," seems to admit that there were (at least at that time) some righteous; and that when it is said that "there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons," it seems to be implied that even a considerable number might so live as to be acceptable to God. Upon the whole, they seem to think you have selected all the texts of an opposite tendency, without attending

Digitized by Google

sufficiently to some of the above description; and that a more gloomy picture of human nature, with reference to a state of future rewards and punishments, is there exhibited, than upon a fair view of life, and all parts of the gospel taken together, should be impressed upon the mind, especially that of young persons who have been religiously educated.

You made me laugh at the consolation, which you say many people receive from the consciousness that they are neither Galatians nor Corinthians; but it was the only part where I was at all inclined even to smile; for I am sure, the tenor of the whole was to make the best of us look grave. May it have its due effect upon all who read it!

Farewell, my dear friend,

I am ever affectionately yours,

W. W. PEPYS.

From Mrs. H. More to Sir W. W. Pepys.

May, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Those unhappy wights who do not speedily answer such letters as you write, are, to adopt a vulgar phrase, no one's enemies but their own. Your letters always afford me so much gratification, both for their own value, and from certain associations inseparable from the recollection of pleasure never to be repeated, in society never to be again enjoyed, that I wonder at myself for not sooner entitling myself to hear from you. The truth is, I

Digitized by Google

am condemned to receive, and conscientiously bound to answer such a multitude of letters neither entertaining nor interesting to me, frequently from strangers, and on matters of business, recommendations, and applications, on which I can do little or nothing; that my attached, and valuable, and pleasant, and instructive friends, are precisely the persons from whose correspondence I am in a good measure cut off. Having but little intermission from either company or bad health, my time does not turn to much account.

Your approbation of my book is very comforting and encouraging to me. My expectations from it were low. It is nothing to the public, that it was written in constant pain, and it is the worst of all apologies, that it was done in such a hurry, that it was very little longer in writing than in printing. But life is short; mine is particularly uncertain, and I had persuaded myself that it was better to bring it out in a defective state, than not at all. I now see many faults and deficiencies, which I have somewhat laboured to diminish. I thank you for telling me of the objections made to it. Your remarks would lead to a large field of discussion, which I would rather enter upon with you in conversation than in writing; because they would involve replies and rejoinders, which could not conveniently be made.

I am not aware of that excessive strictness, of which your pious friends complain. The gospel is strict: "The cutting off a right hand, and plucking out a right eye," though only used as metaphors

Digitized by Google

and illustrations, is surely more strict than anything I have said. It is true, I invariably maintain the same opinion, that *the standard of religion should always be kept high.* The very best of us are sure to pull it down a good many pegs in our practice; but how much lower is the practice of those who fix a lower standard than the New Testament holds out! Your friends, who you say 'are *in* the *constant habit* of doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God,' have indeed reached high attainments. I believe I do wrong to judge of others by myself, for I declare to you I have such a constant sense of imperfection in my best thoughts, words, and actions, that I continually need the refuge of a Saviour, and continually petition for pardon through him, and for the purifying and comforting assistance of his Spirit. I must have expressed myself very ill, if I have said, 'that, at the end of a long life, we are to remember every fault.' I am sure I cannot remember mine at the end of a month, or a week, which was my reason for recommending our spiritual accounts to be kept short. But we can, I think, all remember the particular sins and failings to which we are most addicted; and I meant that we should not content ourselves with *general* confession, except in public worship, but dwell on our personal and individual sins. The individual wrong propensity, besetting sin, and evil temper, is surely known to every serious inquirer into the truth of the gospel, and into the obliquities of his own heart, and this was what I meant by a specific repentance.

Digitized by Google

In a former very kind and pleasant letter upon Cœlebs, I recollect you wished I had contented myself with treating religion in a more general way, like Addison and Johnson, and had not entered into the peculiar doctrines of Christianity so much; which would have pleased more generally.

This I think was the substance of your remark—I will not stay to look for your words. Now, my dear friend, I am afraid I am going to shock you, and to lower myself in your esteem. I love and honour those two men in a very high degree, though the term *love* rather belongs to Addison, *honour* to Johnson. Yet I am persuaded their writings would have done far deeper and wider good, had they not generalized their religion so much. The soundness of Johnson's principles is incontestible, but he scarcely ever enters on any evangelical truth. When he tells us himself that he had scarcely ever read the Scriptures through, and when we call to mind, besides, that he had some superstition and weakness mixed with his piety, we see the reason of his reluctance to dwell on these topics. Addison had a very devout spirit. His Saturday papers on the Evidences are admirable. Still he appears not to have entered into those deep views of evangelical truth which abound in Pascal, in Fenelon, in Baxter, Leighton, Bishop Hall, &c. His ideas and feelings of the Deity are sublime and elevating. If it were not the height of impertinence and conceit to refer to oneself, I would desire you to turn to 'The Hints to a Princess,' vol. ii. p. 149, where you will see I have endeavoured to

Digitized by Google

do justice to those two noble authors, though I thought it would be invidious to say what I have here said, of my regret that they did not dwell more on the doctrines of Christianity, and on what distinguishes it from all other religious systems as a scheme of salvation.

I have been reading with pleasure, 'Bennet's Christian Oratory.' It is not a brilliant work, but full of sound good sense, very spiritual, practical, and serious. I deal little in speculation, and never in controversial works, and like no devotion that is not sober-minded. Some of old Baxter's practical works, I think, you would admire. I have lately read his '*Advice to the Aged*,' his '*Dying Thoughts*,' and his '*Saints' Rest*.' One must allow for the style and diffuse manner of these voluminous old writers. They are, however, full of matter. I like them far better than our wordy moderns. I except Bishop Horsley and some few others.

A propos of moderns,—one of the most valuable has, with his amiable family, been passing some days with us—I mean Mr. Gisborne, with whose *Sermons*, *Duties of Men*, *Duties of Women*, and *Survey of Scripture*, I doubt not your family are well acquainted. It is hard to say whether he be a more sound divine or amiable man. His sermons are truly scriptural, without the least tincture of bad taste or enthusiasm. He lives like a patriarch, at the head of his nine children, with his estimable and amiable lady. I have thoughts of visiting him in his forest of Needwood, of which,

Digitized by Google

as he draws finely, he has taken the scenery, before it was, alas, nearly disafforested. We had other authors, too, among our last week's visitors.

To-morrow I am expecting to see a grand-daughter of your old revered friend, Lord Lyttleton; I mean Lady Lucy Barry;[1] she is lovely in mind and person, and from being a little gay, is become very serious. She gives a pleasing account of the piety of the Dowager Lady Lyttleton, whom I used to meet at your house, and of whom I had lost sight.

I was equally grieved and surprised to hear of the loss Sir Lucas had sustained. I truly sympathise with him and you. I had never heard it. Your Croydon epitaph is admirable and appropriate. It is in the manner of Crashaw or Fletcher, or some of our other old poets. I hope you have shown it to your afflicted brother. I do pity him from my heart.

As I have laid myself under no vow not to write oftener, I hope you will not punish me for my silence, by going out your full time. I have most self-denyingly exceeded mine.

I beg you to present my most affectionate respects to Lady Pepys, of whom I retain the most pleasing recollections. Your sons and daughters cannot remember *me;* them I perfectly remember, not, indeed, under their present form of men and women, but as fine promising children. Are we to have any more Montagu letters?

Adieu! my dear friend. Think of me as one who

[1] Afterwards Lady Farnham.

Digitized by Google

is become neither a bigot nor a misanthrope. My spirits are good and even gay.

Your's truly,

H. More.

I believe *we* are the only existing correspondents who write letters of nine pages without once adverting to politics; without using the word bullion, Portugal, Wellington. I was a mad enthusiast for Spain at the beginning of things. I am afraid my enthusiasm for the country arose from my fondness for Don Quixote;—but *their* coolness has cooled *me*. I begin to fear that in the order of providence, such a religion and such a government *must* be overturned.

From the Rev. Dr. Magee to Mrs. H. More.

Trinity College, Dublin, Sept. 7, 1811.

Dear Madam,

The copy of your last excellent work, in consequence of some mismanagement in the transmission by the bookseller, reached me late: and, partly from my own illness, partly from the succeeding illness of other members of my family, I have been still later in offering my acknowledgments for so gratifying a mark of your remembrance and attention.

On the powers of thought and felicities of language, which characterize this as they do every other production of the author's pen, I shall make

Digitized by Google

no observation, A tale so often told is too trite for repetition. And, although in one view the same might perhaps be said of the spirit of Christian piety and the zeal of Christian benevolence which animate the work, yet in another it will not apply. The commendation bestowed on the doing good is often the proof that good is done: and to the mind which, like superior natures, derives its happiness from contributing to the happiness of others, it is a tribute due in point of justice, no less than a testimony demanded in point of truth, to confess the admiration and the sympathy excited by the beauty of those virtuous and religious sentiments which it displays and recommends. In such cases praise is in some degree participation; and whilst it certifies the benefit, cannot be unpleasing to the benefactor. Praise of this nature neither can I be ashamed to give, nor you to receive.

I have read your work on 'Practical Piety,' with real edification. My taste, my heart, and my understanding have all received their several shares of improvement; and I have risen from its study with a strengthened impression of what I have already felt on the perusal of your writings; that the life of the author has been a public benefit and a public blessing. For its continuance, and for its continuance with the enjoyment of health both bodily and mental, you have my most sincere wishes, as you must have those of all who wish well to the best interests of human mind.

This country seldom supplies much of literary

Digitized by Google

intelligence. Dr. Hales is prosecuting his great work on Chronology, with his usual industry. He is on the point of bringing out his second volume, which, in the process of arranging, in their due places, the events of scripture history, will be occupied as much with sacred criticism as chronology. As to myself, with every disposition to labour in the vineyard of sacred literature, I find that I am altogether an unprofitable workman. The drudgery of the perpetual circle of academic employment which belongs to my peculiar situation, joined to a frequent recurrence of ill-health for some years, has essentially interfered with my meditated exertions in the way of publication. In the course of the winter, however, I hope, by God's assisttance, to bring to light a volume, which has now for nine years (a length of time demanded by the poet for the poem) lain by me in a state nearly ready for the press. This volume I design as the forerunner of an extended work on the prophecies relating to the Messiah.

I am, dear Madam, with the most perfect respect and esteem,

Your much obliged
and very faithful servant,
W. MAGEE.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. H. More to Mrs. Kennicott.

Barley Wood, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Pleasant as your last letter was, and much as it entertained me, I should not probably have answered it so soon, but for a most distressing paragraph in the papers respecting a frightful danger of the Bishop of Durham on Highgate Hill. I read it with horror, and shall take it kind if you will send me half a line to say he is well. I figure to myself what his acute sensibility must have suffered from the catastrophe of the unfortunate post-boy. I had been just rejoicing in the account of his more than usual good looks and good health, which we had the pleasure of hearing from the two Mr. Lysons, who made us a visit lately. They were as usual very informing and very entertaining, and would be still more so if they would agree not to talk both at once. It was an old agreement between us that when they came to the letter S. Barley Wood should be their head quarters; but as they have only completed the letter C, I shall not live till they perambulate Somersetshire, nor do I think they can expect to complete so vast an enterprise.

It was not with your usual discretion that on intending to tell me how long you were to stay in town, you took care to put your broad wafer over the two words which were meant to inform me. You have perhaps left London; otherwise, like the old woman recorded in the first poetical composition

Digitized by Google

I remember, 'if you are not gone, you live there still,' which I will venture to suppose may be the case.

You ask me what I propose to do in the summer? I am afraid of saying 'to-morrow I will go into such a city,' &c. The Gisbornes press me very kindly to visit their forest, of which, however, fine as it may be, themselves are the best part. I have neither promised nor refused. As soon as Parliament is up, the Thorntons, whom I have not seen for five years, come to us for a few days. We are also expecting the Hoares. I forgot to say that if I would promise to go to Yoxall Lodge, Mr. Gisborne said he would write and *make* you join us there. You see he knows how to bait his trap.

I hear the high Calvinists declare war against 'Practical Piety.' Is it not a little hard that one must not write one's own sentiments, but the sentiments of others? We have many opinions in common, but if I adopted their *peculiar* opinions, I must write against my conscience. One of their criticisms will make you smile. They say that my having called the sun *he*, is idolatrous; as if I believed in Phœbus or Apollo! If this be true, both David and St. John were guilty of idolatry.—See Bible translation of xixth Psalm, and Revelation i. 19. to say nothing of good Dr. Watts's Morning Hymn. I wish the book had no faults more substantial than these.

We are paying in common with all invalids, the penalty of this drenching weather. It makes us beautiful without, and sick within. How do you

Digitized by Google

stand it? I just spy something suspicious of what to the best of my remembrance is *sun*, but it is so long since I have seen HIS face, that I ought not to speak too positively.

When you see Mrs. Porteus, remember me kindly to her. Adieu, my dear friend!

Ever affectionately your's,

H. MORE.

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Harford.

Shrewsbury, Sept. 9, 1811.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Accept a hasty line for your entertaining letter; I have been so constantly in motion or in company, or indisposed, that I have not written one letter but of absolute necessity, or business, since I met you that last morning. You have not the less lived in my affectionate remembrance. Instead of the stipulated fortnight, Mr. Gisborne detained us a month in his charming forest, accompanying us, however, on our excursions. We obeyed your commands in making the Derbyshire tour. Matlock is enchanting; of a different character, but not more interesting than Malvern, where we stayed a couple of days in our way to Staffordshire. Every thing concurred to make our visit at Yoxall interesting; scenery of a peculiar character, and pleasant society in the house and neighbourhood. Among our inmates was Mr.——, brother to Lord ——, the bent of whose mind and the turn of whose conversation incline me to believe that he is not un-

Digitized by Google

worthy to fill the pulpit at Lutterworth, once so worthily filled by Wickliffe. It is delightful to witness the many accessions to the cause of Christian piety in the higher ranks of life.

We are come to this fine old town, to visit some friends. Both the near and distant views are intimately connected with our history. Here is the battle-field, where Harold once fought; and since still more distinguished by the fall of Hotspur, Harry Percy. They do not exactly show the spot where *Falstaff ran away*. Another hill presents the scene of the valour of Caractacus. Another of an ancient oak, said to have been planted by Owen Glendower. Still more substantially valuable are the numerous edifices consecrated to public charity; all of which appear to be remarkably well-conducted. With public charity, the name of Richard Reynolds naturally connects itself, as it did with Colebrook Dale, the most wonderful mixture of Elysium and Tartarus my eyes ever beheld; steam-engines, wheels, forges, fires, the dunnest and the densest smoke, and the most stupendous iron-bridge, all rising amidst hills that in natural beauty rival Dovedale and Matlock. We grieved that excessive fatigue and heat, rendered more intolerable by a withering east wind, prevented us from roving through Reynolds's fine walk, which he keeps up for the benevolent accommodation of others. To-morrow (alas! it is still a parching east wind) we propose, if it please God, to set out on a little Welch tour with our hosts, to peep at the Vale of Llangollen, Valle Crucis, Chirk Castle, &c. &c. We hope to

Digitized by Google

return over the classic ground of Ludlow, a town I much wish to see. May God bless and direct you, my dear friend,

Your's affectionately,

H. More.

From Mrs. H. More to Mrs. King.

Barley Wood, Nov. 6, 1811.

My dear Madam,

Your interesting letter written in August deserved earlier notice. I must defer to account for my silence, till I have requested you to stop your kind benefaction to Shipham Club, you being the only member that has not discontiued it, since sickness and infirmity have compelled us to give up the public meeting. Our friends regret losing their annual pleasant day, but we are no longer equal to the fatigue.

You will be surprised to hear what a rambler I have been. I, who never reckoned on going again out of my own little circle, took courage the beginning of August, to set out with Patty on a long promised visit to our excellent friend Mr. Gisborne at his forest in Staffordshire. The forest indeed is destroyed, at which I was disposed to be dissatisfied. But when I saw near ten thousand acres of yellow harvest, when I saw a beautiful new church erected, and a handsome parsonage built and endowed, and my admirable friend preaching to a good congregation, in a place so lately the shelter of thieves, and poachers, and vagabonds, I

Digitized by Google

gave up my romance in favour of such solid improvements. Mr. Gisborne and some other gentlemen still possess a beautiful piece of forest about their respective habitations. Mr. G. spends his large fortune in a most liberal manner. His establishment is large, and his manner of living elegantly hospitable. We had an excellent society in the house, which is the abode of talents, piety, and benevolence.

We stayed a month with our friends at Yoxall, and then crossed the country to visit some old acquaintances at Shrewsbury, whence we took a peep into North Wales, and visited the celebrated ladies of Llangollen Vale. With the vale and the ladies we were much delighted. We paid a visit in our way home, to your valuable friend the Bishop of Gloucester, who received us most kindly. He spoke with affectionate concern of the domestic loss you have had the misfortune to sustain.

My journey was of service to me on the whole. The chief benefit I reaped from it, was that it improved my sleep, which I had never recovered since my great illness. Patty's complaint in her head continues. It has extremely affected her hearing, and her eyes are so weak and inflamed, that she can scarcely read or write: this is a great trial to her; and my two elder sisters are very infirm.

I am very sorry not to have had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Collinson, but he was so circumstanced, that I could not reasonably expect it. I hope he received a copy of 'Practical Piety,' which I

Digitized by Google

directed Cadell to send him. I should have ordered one for you, but I did not know where to find you.

Your future plan of life, my dear Madam, will, I trust, prove as comfortable as it is rational. I hope it will please God to sanctify to you every trial, and to make your remaining days, days of peace. Should you ever visit this part of the world, I hope you will not forget your friends at Barley Wood.

I must venture to direct at random. If you are at Gateshead, pray remember me kindly.

Your's, my dear Madam,

Very faithfully,

H. MORE.

From the Rev. R. C. Whalley to Mrs. H. More.

Chelwood, 1811.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Your very kind and acceptable present of books required an earlier acknowledgment, and your introduction of it by a little story added a grace to it which you know how to give to all your doings. I am peculiarly beholden to you on my son's account, who I presume has by this time expressed his own thanks. It so fell out that he was with me, though just getting on horseback for Wells, when the parcel arrived. Nothing in the book way could be more welcome to him than Leighton's works, with whose scheme of religion he entirely coincides, however distant he may be from him in that holiness of soul which properly belongs to it. Yet, blessed be

Digitized by Google

God, he is a pure and serious character, and evidently a growing one.

I have often lamented that you know so little of ——. Indeed it is not easy to know him well, for he has an invincible shyness about him, and has nothing of the art of setting himself off. He wishes one of these days to visit you for a day or two under my wing, and I hope we shall accomplish it; but his distance from me renders opportunities of that kind scarce and precarious. To see more of him would be the greatest comfort I could have in the creature, but the main part of it I can taste at a distance—the knowing him to be of God's family and household, and being assured that we shall, when God sees fit, be brought together for ever! I have also the happiness of believing that there is of late a material change wrought in his wife, who was an amiable and valuable domestic character, and as far as nature went, disposed to fall in with him in every thing; but I saw nothing further till a letter I received from her not long since, convinced me of it. Her husband had been dangerously ill, and that, she said, brought her to see his value for the first time. Oh! it is of the last importance that they who are connected together for life, should not be disjoined in the life of faith. The living soul will always be hampered by the dead soul. No graces can act with freedom under such circumstances; nor can children (which is a main thing) be rightly brought up for God. But innumerable are the little discordances that must arise from that great discordance, and the least

Digitized by Google

suspicion of having a child of wrath in one's bosom, must be a sad weight there. How merciful is God in taking off my portion of such a weight! for a weight it has been even to me. What I *ought* to render unto God for this and all his blessings, I well know—but alas! I vow and pay not.

I have been up and down as to health through the winter. While I had the wisdom to confine myself, I endured tolerably well; but when I had the folly to tempt God by going out to do some duty, I was sorely punished for it. Latterly, and during all this fine weather, I have been very weak and ill. A jaundice has been hanging upon me, my recovery from which has been retarded I believe by self-will —a degree of sinful repining at my not being able to go out to visit sick and dying persons, of which there have been more instances here of late than any body can remember. Six people have died almost all together in this little parish, and it was impossible for me (so ill was I myself) to have much communication with any of them; with some none at all. But I comfort myself with thinking that I never ceased to warn every one of them in private as well as in public, of the danger of neglecting the salvation offered them, and of receiving the grace of God in vain. I do not think you can long to see me so much as I long to see you, and spend some quiet convalescent days with you. I do not dare come out at present, and when I can venture, must first pay a visit where I think I can be of *more service* than at Barley Wood; however, when I once get out, I trust not to return home without seeing you,

Digitized by Google

of which you shall have intimation; and if you will send as far as Bristol for me I shall be glad of that ease. I have a thousand discourses to hold with you, among which your excellent books will not be forgotten. I say nothing of them now, because in truth I have not yet fairly read them, but I have no doubt of the good they will do, though your hopes are low. It is good certainly to keep all one's hopes and expectations low—except the hope of eternal life, and that should be confirmed in us. It ought to be an undoubted thing with Christians that God has accepted them in "the Beloved," not from uncertain transitory feelings and impulses, but upon the strength of the holy irrevocable promises to believers; here I rest—and if I did not, miserable should I be, since my taste and enjoyment of sensible comforts has long been very slender indeed. And now, my dear friend, rejoicing that your health is as it is; (though I could still wish it better) for to write books, implies in my mind, a considerable strength of frame and nerves, independent of intellect;—and wishing you all every blessing together, and that my eyes may ere long see and partake of it,

I am, your ever faithful,
and grateful friend and servant,
R. C. WHALLEY.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. H. More to Lady O. Sparrow.

Barley Wood, Saturday, Feb. 1812.

MY DEAR LADY OLIVIA,

I appear to you in a new character, that of a prompt and forward correspondent. Were you to give this representation of me to my friends, they would never suspect the portrait to be mine. But having occasion to send a request to Mr. Addington, though I wrote to you only two days ago by Lord Gambier, I could not resist the temptation of thanking you for your kind little volunteer letter, received last night. One gift is worth two debts, to the latter justice obliges us, the former is more acceptable, as being the fruit of affection.

You are to understand that I have a particular notion about correspondence. I would not give much for what is called a *fine letter*, even from those who are most gifted in writing; if I want sentiment, or fine things, I can get them in books. What I want in a letter, is to know what my friend is doing, or thinking, or saying. Now this I cannot find in a book; nor can I by this mode get at the heart and mind of the writer, as I can by little unpremeditated details. This is one of my objections in general to the publication of letters;—if they are honest, and open, and faithful, the peculiar interest they excite is in the mind of the person to whom they are written; hints and details are nothing to the world, which is only looking for fine sentences

Digitized by Google

and polished periods. Cowper's letters are all ease and kindness, and feeling and affection—they were written for his correspondents. What Miss Seward's are I need not say, except that good taste revolts at them, and truth and candour abhor them; they were written for the public. But I did not intend to say a word of all this when I begun. I only meant to say how delighted I was with your dinner, and with your kindness in being impatient to make me in some measure a sharer in a society of which I should have been so happy to partake.

If you see Mr. Way again, have the goodness to ask him if he has received a letter from me. Not knowing his address in town, I inclosed it to the Bishop of St. David's, who had perhaps left London; if so, it will follow him to Durham, and he will probably forward it to Mr. W. to Stanstead Park. He is a pretty sort of geographer to think that place compatible with Brampton!

I am once more going through my darling Archbishop Leighton's Commentary on St. Peter. It is a mine of intellectual and spiritual wealth. Each chapter would make a volume of modern theology. Nothing is superficially described. He always goes to the bottom, and without wearying the reader, hardly leaves any thing unsaid. He always catches hold on the heart.

Are you acquainted with Lady B——? I have not seen her since her marriage, but she promised to be a most interesting character. I saw some letters from her on her change of situation, full of such right views and Christian plans and

Digitized by Google

resolutions, as tended to confirm my opinion that she would prove worthy of her father. He is now most conscientiously bestowing his patronage on none but exemplary characters, and is indeed a prelate worthy of the *olden time*. Adieu, my dearest Lady Olivia, I commend you and yours to your God and their God.

Your's most faithfully,

H. More.

From Sir W. W. Pepys to Mrs. H. More.

Wimpole Street, March 31, 1812.

My dear Friend,

As the terms on which you and I correspond, make it unnecessary to trouble you with the various reasons why I have not before thanked you for your last delightful letter, I shall dedicate no part of my paper (which always appears too scanty when I am writing to you) to excuses and apologies. You will be glad to hear that it has pleased God to continue to me my health and good spirits, though I attained on the 11th of January, the completion of my seventy-second year; and that all my six children, though they have long since been out in the world as men and women, continue to afford me, as they have ever done from their birth, nothing but comfort and pleasure. When I look about me, and see what so frequently occurs in other families, I cannot help feeling the deepest gratitude for such inestimable blessings; and I

Digitized by Google

trust that He who sees what impression they have made on my heart, will accept that gratitude as the best incense I can offer! I remember when I was young, though very much awake to the *fear* of God, I had very confused notions of what could be meant by the *love* of Him; and though I could repeat very cordially my thanksgivings for *preservation*, I could not bring myself to join heartily in thanks for my *creation:* whether this might arise from not having at that age duly weighed and appreciated the blessings which I enjoyed, or from any depression of spirits arising from my health not being so good as it has since been, I cannot say, but certain it is that my gratitude has increased in proportion (though an inadequate one) to the blessings which I have experienced; and were I called upon to say what have been some of the most delightful moments of my life, I could with great truth answer,—those in which I felt *that* gratitude most sensibly. When, therefore, I am told that heaven will consist in praising and adoring the Author of good, I can now perfectly understand that language; and though much of the delight arising from the sensation of gratitude must here be much alloyed by a sense of one's own unworthiness, yet when that is removed by the delightful sound of "Well done, good and faithful servant," I can conceive no greater happiness than that of adoring such transcendent goodness and mercy.

You see how naturally, the moment I sit down to write to you, my thoughts turn upon religious subjects; which arises from my having so long con-

Digitized by Google

sidered you, not only as a saint, but an apostle, and is the pure effect of association, not of any desire of paying my court to you by appearing to you peculiarly affected by a sense of religion.

I am quite glad to find that you like Lady L—— B——; she appears to me to approach as near to that state which Milton so well describes—

> ——'When oft converse with heavenly habitants
> Begins to cast a beam on th' outward shape,
> The unpolluted temple of the mind—'

as any person I ever knew, and I am sure she must have been highly gratified by a visit to you. I was much struck when I was talking with her, some years ago, on serious subjects, to recollect how long it was since I conversed with her excellent grandfather on topics of that kind. Does it not often occur to you, that persons with whom you have formerly talked intimately on the interests of a world to come, are now initiated into the secrets of that country from whence no traveller returns, and may now be pitying our misconceptions, or rejoicing at the rectitude of our ideas and feelings concerning it? I suppose it was the prevalence of this speculation which gave such celebrity, when I was young, to Mrs. Rowe's Letters. For my part, feeling myself to stand, as I do, on the confines of the world of spirits, I take no interest in reading any thing so much as that which tends to confirm my faith, strengthen my hope, and establish my confidence in the mercy of God. I have, therefore, this last summer, been principally employed in re-

Digitized by Google

ducing extracts from that delightful book of Psalms under the three heads of supplication, trust in God, and praise and thanksgiving. This, I know, has been often done, but I thought it most useful to do it for myself. I have also been much employed upon Macknight's Commentary; but I have very little satisfaction from any thing which requires much explanation, or is made the subject of much controversy; because I am persuaded that the gospel was intended for the poor and ignorant, as well as for the rich and learned, and therefore nothing can be essential to salvation, which requires long and laborious habits of theological study to comprehend.

We have been well amused lately with the Life of Lord Charlemont, though written evidently under the influence of party prejudices; but I am so fond of all biography that were I to begin the Life of Jack Ketch, I should never quit him till I saw him hanged on his own gallows, and read his last dying speech.

I hope the great exertions which are now making to diffuse education among the poor have your approbation, and that you feel no apprehension lest all the ploughmen should desert their ploughs as soon as they are able to read. If they followed them merely for amusement, I should indeed be alarmed lest they might prefer the superior entertainment of reading the Arabian Nights, but as hunger is as formidable to the best poet as it is to the lowest thrasher, I am in no fear of the land remaining uncultivated; and believe that the proportion of those who are hanged and cannot

Digitized by Google

read, to the literati who undergo that punishment, is enormously great. 'If you had lost your way in a wood and saw two men at a distance,' (says an author) 'the one with a gun, and the other with a book in his hand, to which of them would you address yourself?' But the reformation of manners among the lower orders in Scotland, since the establishment of parish schools, supersedes all argument upon the subject. I may perhaps have told you that upon my accosting a poor boy who was tending pigs on a desolate heath in Scotland, and asking him whether he had ever heard of Fingal, he answered that 'He was a great captain.' I am so persuaded that whatever tends to improve the understanding and give *mind* an ascendancy over *matter*, is beneficial to morality, that a few glaring instances of great talents being perverted to bad purposes, do not shake my faith on that subject; and I can safely say (without the suspicion of flattering you) that those especially among your sex who have been most eminent for intellectual attainments, have been also most distinguished for religion and virtue.

Ever affectionately yours,

W. W. PEPYS.

From the Rev. T. Gisborne to Mrs. H. More.

Barmouth, near Dolgelly, May 29, 1812.

MY DEAR MADAM,

It is not uncommon with letter-writers, nor I believe with myself in that capacity, after proving

Digitized by Google

the existing locality of the penman, by an accurately copious date, to begin the epistle with some such words as these—'Here we are.' This custom, whether proceeding from a laudable solicitude to overlook no discoverable means of enforcing the plainest truths, or from a cautious apprehension of over-rating the quickness of perception and the intellectual capacity of the person addressed, I forbear in the present instance from pursuing. Yet you may like to know why we came hither, how we came hither, what we are doing here, and what sort of a place this same *here* is. This division, though unpremeditated, into heads, you will think somewhat ominous; but I will proceed through them at a reasonably swift rate. We came hither because Mrs. G. has not been very stout; and as the sea has heretofore been repeatedly and highly beneficial to her, I was anxious that she should come to its margin before the summer should have elapsed. I am thankful to say, that by God's blessing, even a week's residence has been evidently productive of advantage. We came hither through Shrewsbury, Welchpool, and Dolgelly, (I omit inferior names,) crossing the principality from east to west. The country was highly interesting, first in the way of beauty, then of sublimity. From Welchpool we passed over very irregular ground, but progressively ascending, for we were tracing the brisk stream of the Vernwy to its source, during twenty miles, through well-wooded vallies, crossed or joined by other collateral vallies and their streams, with frequent openings on the right or on the left, or in

Digitized by Google

front, to near hills, or to distant mountains. During the last three miles, however, all the ornamental clothing of the valley which we were pursuing became more and more sparing. Perfect nakedness ensued; the stream had diminished to a rill,—was then contracted to a thread,—was then lost: and we found ourselves traversing a flat peatmoss, on a situation which, in Cumberland, would be called a *hawse*, and in Wales, is denominated a *bwlch*; namely, a high tract crossing and closing up a valley at its upper end, and joining the still loftier hills by which it is formed.

Having been much in the North of England, and once in the Highlands of Scotland, I could not but know that this peatmoss would speedily begin to descend before us: that a new thread of stream would rise from it, would accompany our course, would swell into a rill, and by receiving tributary rills into a river, while we should be descending into a new glen, enlarge itself in its progress towards the Irish Sea. So we found the event; and slept in this new valley at Mallwyd. But this River Dovey and its valley, would have led us to the sea at Towyn; whereas we were bent for Barmouth. So we turned a little to the north-west over an ascent of two miles, and from its summit descended into the valley, perhaps the most beautiful in South Britain, of Dolgelly. The variety of rocky and woody prominences, irregular ranges of hills, bold mountains, with the prominent and stupendous precipices of Cader Idris, form an assemblage, which you must see, in order to con-

Digitized by Google

ceive it. Ten miles down this valley westward, brought us hither.

Our employments here you will partly anticipate, as bathing, and walking on the sands. To these Mrs. G. adds airings; and I add, walks on the hills and mountains. Two days ago I employed a long day, (and did not find it at all too long for the objects to be surveyed, and the distance to be travelled) in ascending and exploring Cader Idris. If you knew my natural love of a mountain and its appendages, you would know what gratification I received from this expedition. My sublimer pleasures have been occasionally varied by others of a humbler class. One morning, for instance, there was a ship launched before our window. On another, I was entertained through the thinness of the floor in the lodging where we first were housed, by hearing, while our Staffordshire footman was taking a long lesson in Welsh, word by word, from the maid of the house, the uncouth lumps of sound which, in his attempts to catch her pronunciation, tumbled from his lips. Another day, I had an hour's walk with a Welsh farmer, possessed of very little English, on the hills; and found a somewhat diverting obstacle to my geographical inquiries, in his firm conviction that east was the point opposite to north. What this place is, few additional words will suffice to shew. It is partly hung on the sides of a rock, and partly placed at its foot, close to the influx of the river Mowddwch, a small stream, but a spacious estuary into the sea, about the centre of the great concavity of the bay

Digitized by Google

of Cardigan. The long peninsula of Caernarvonshire, terminated by Bardsey Island, bounds the view at about twenty miles distance to the north west. In front is the open sea. On the south, another promontory pushes some miles into the sea, rising eastward into mountains uniting with Cader Idris. But I will say nothing about them: for I have scarcely left myself room to express our cordial interest respecting your health, and that of your sisters. As to Miss ——, or Mr. —— my advice is, that you bestir yourself, and be beforehand with him or her, in a continuation of Cœlebs by your own pen, and authenticated by your name.

Your's, dear Madam,

Faithfully and affectionately,

T. GISBORNE.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER V.

AFTER the lapse of another year, Mrs. More began to feel that she had not, in the two volumes of 'Practical Piety,' fully discharged her mind upon this copious and momentous subject; and when the usual interval she took for pausing between the publication of one work and the commencement of another had elapsed, she began a sort of sequel to it, which she entitled, 'Christian Morals,' and which the abundance and variety of ideas that flowed in upon her as she proceeded, induced her to extend likewise to two volumes. No sooner was it announced to the public, than the whole first edition, as in the former instance, was bespoken. We have said that her feelings were very frequently gratified by communications of the benefit of which her labours had heen productive to the souls of her fellow-creatures, which she truly considered as her

Digitized by Google

brightest reward; and with respect to this latter work, as well as those which preceded and followed it, we might appeal to the knowledge of various persons now living, for similar testimonies, which never happened to reach her ears. The following letter bears date just after the appearance of 'Christian Morals.'

From W. Gray, Esq. to Mrs. H. More.

York, 22nd December, 1812.

DEAR MADAM,

I hasten to acknowledge the very great favour of a present of your 'Christian Morals,' which has this moment reached me. Of its contents I can say nothing, farther than to express my persuasion that its perusal will afford me much pleasure and much profit; unless indeed, HE, whose you are and whom you serve, should have suffered your pen to forget its cunning. But of this I have no apprehension. He who witnesses your sincere desire to employ, as a good steward, for the advancement of his glory and the interests of his kingdom, the talents and opportunities which he has vouchsafed you, will not fail or forsake you in the attempt. I welcome the appearance of every new publication of yours, not only in this point of view, but as a demonstration of the goodness of God in lengthening your life and continuing your powers of body and mind; and I trust, that along with this boon, he has been pleased to impart to you a considerable alleviation of your sufferings which rendered life

Digitized by Google

itself a burden. How different a course of discipline does he generally employ upon us from that which we should prescribe for ourselves! How different, indeed, are *all* his proceedings for promoting the grand objects of his kingdom and government from those which we should expect! To instance only the present moment, when amidst warfare and desolation, he is introducing and spreading the Gospel of Peace! I congratulate you, my dear Madam, on having lived to such a period. For my own part, I feel truly thankful for the privilege of being permitted, before I go hence, to have a glimpse of the dawning of that day, which cannot be now far distant, when "the fulness of the Gentiles shall come into the church of Christ, and all Israel be saved." This may be effected, in a way different from what we suppose; but let us rejoice in the assurance that it *will* be effected, and hail for the present the evident operation of the Spirit of God on the hearts of thousands, and almost millions, disposing them to circulate the Scriptures, and promote in various ways the conversion and instruction of mankind. At York, we stand amazed at our own success; in the concern of the Bible Society especially. Without countenance (though, in justice, I must add, not in the face of avowed hostility) we have succeeded beyond calculation, amongst all ranks and degrees of people; and so it seems to be in most other places. All "this is the Lord's doing," and indeed "marvellous in our eyes."

I learn from Wellington, where a son of mine yet

Digitized by Google

is, that exertions are making for accomplishing a County Auxiliary Bible Society in Somersetshire. He has been laudably active in preparatory measures, as the Wellington Secretary, in which he has pleased me much. It seems the Sheriff has negatived the requisition for a county meeting; but I tell my son, if they can establish vigorous societies in large towns, which shall operate on their respective neighbourhoods, the effect may be more beneficial than that of a county meeting, which often languishes in the extremities, though momentarily vigorous in its centre. *This* vast county (with some few exceptions) may fairly be said to be *carried*, merely by these town associations, as the reports of the Bible Society will shew.

You will be concerned to hear, that our excellent neighbour, Dr. Buchanan, is yet in a most dubious state of health. Yet he *will* labour. At present he is considering, perhaps writing, upon the state of religion in the West India Islands. He has engaged in a curacy just by, (to keep out a person of different religious views) but is obliged to employ a curate under himself. He occasionally preaches; but though the church is not large, it always seems to overdo him.

With the cordial and respectful remembrances of Mrs. Gray, to yourself and your sisters, Mrs. Martha More especially, of whose attentions we retain a grateful sense, I remain, dear Madam,

Your greatly obliged
and sincerely obedient servant,
WM. GRAY.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. H. More to Mrs. Kennicott.

Barley Wood, 1813.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

If I live much longer, I believe I shall in time out-do you in the dilatoriness of my correspondence, and that is saying a great deal. Great languor of frame, (having been confined the last five weeks with a severe cough,) in addition to tormenting bile, and more tormenting company, make part of my apology. I should not, however, think it was treating you you like the friend of my heart, if I did not name a still more efficient interruption to writing so many letters as I ought. Having been confined six months out of eight since Christmas, and foreseeing, or rather knowing, that I have not many Christmases to look forward to, I was willing to turn my imprisonment to some little account, and have been writing some more *last words*. You remember how frequently in the last century, fresh books came out under the title of 'More Last Words of Old Mr. Dodd.' This has been, I think, pretty much my case, but though I do not know that my writings do any good, yet I am led to say with Cato,

'While yet I live, let me not live in vain.'

The book is to be called 'Christian Morals.' I do not talk of it, except to one or two particular friends,

Digitized by Google

because I do not like to have it discussed and to be questioned beforehand. I have not finished it. Whether it is worth finishing I hardly know, but Providence sometimes works by poor weak instruments. If I had expected to be so overwhelmed by company, I believe I should have gone from home to write more at leisure; but it is now too late in the season. We had nineteen persons here yesterday, of whom I did not know six. I have, however, had much pleasure in seeing some old friends. H. Bowdler last week; and another day Mrs. Barbauld, an acquaintance of forty years. I greatly admire her talents and taste; but our views, both religious and political, run so very wide of each other, that I lose the great pleasure that might otherwise be found in her society, which is very intellectual.

You give me a reviving hope of seeing you here next year. A hope which I will not suffer the thoughts of an intervening winter to damp.

I long to know whether you have been able to establish your Bible Society in the teeth of so much opposition. I am vexed you are likely to lose those valuable persons you allude to. I was surprised to receive last week from the Bishop of Lincoln, his late charge to his clergy, entirely *against* the Catholic question, after having voted for Lord Grenville's motion.

I have so many things that I wish to say, that not knowing to which to give the precedence, I am obliged to forego them all. Two most amiable and interesting friends, the Rev. C—— H—— and his wife, are now staying with us. If all society was

Digitized by Google

like theirs, I should be the last to complain of too much company.

When you write, do not forget to mention your own health particularly.

Do you get good accounts of the Bishop of Durham? How are Mrs. Porteus, Lady Cremorne, &c.? Tell me everything, and believe me,

Very faithfully and affectionately your's,

H. More.

From Mrs. More to Lady Olivia Sparrow.

Barley Wood, 1813.

A STORY.

A little girl having teazed me very much the other day with, 'I want this, I want that, I want the other;' to put an end to her importunity I said; 'You want everything in the world; I suppose you will want the moon next.' She took the hint, and soon after came in, crying, 'Give me the moon; it is my moon; I *will* have the moon.'

THE APPLICATION.

Now I am a large spoiled child. Your ladyship has so accustomed me to have all my wants, expressed and unexpressed, granted, and my very wishes and even thoughts anticipated, that I too, thus spoiled, am in danger of crying for the moon. You, as a natural consequence, will fly to Herschel, and consult him upon the best means of

Digitized by Google

conveying it; undertaking, if the whole should not be portable, to send me a crescent, or a still smaller slice.

My sisters, and a friend in the house, were yesterday telling me that I *must treat* them with *Rokeby*. I told them positively no; that my bookseller had a general order to send me every thing of Walter Scott's, (I mean his poetry,) as soon as it should descend to the attainable price of twelve shillings. *Sur ces entrefaites*,—arrives the carrier, with the costly quarto. Happening to have two good pair of lungs on a visit to us, we fell to; but as we could only get through four cantos last night, I defer sending my thanks till to-morrow, when I trust we shall have finished it.

Thursday night.—We *have* finished it, and are truly grateful for the amusement you have bestowed on us. Having only *heard* it, and not yet read it myself, I do not feel competent to speak decidedly as to its merits. Whatever Scott writes, always shows the hand of a master. There is in *Rokeby* the same vivid tints of painting, the same varied powers of description, the same opulence of imagery, as in his former poems; but according to my present judgment, imperfectly formed, it is deficient in interest. As it is no affront to compare an author with himself, I will venture to say that I think it far inferior in characteristic touches, in grace and playfulness, and in general power of attraction, to the *Lady of the Lake*. The fifth canto, in which I expected to find such a progress in the business of the poem, is taken up in singing

Digitized by Google

songs, very pretty songs I allow,—so that the events tending to the catastrophe are all reserved for the last canto, and are of course huddled together with less skill and probability than I expected from such a master of the art of poetry. Beautiful passages are numerous, and there are a thousand graces which I shall delight to dwell upon, when I come to read for myself. I am not disposed to be critical when I read poetry, where pleasure is the prevailing feeling, as it ever must be in reading Walter Scott; and therefore I should not have made the above remarks, but by your command.

Now to descend to a far humbler work, and which deserves, and will meet with far severer criticism. You command me also to tell you which I prefer, *Christian Morals* or *Practical Piety?* I can only repeat the expression I have just applied to Scott, that an author neither gains nor loses in being compared with himself. I therefore presume to say, that of two indifferent things, I myself give the precedence to *Christian Morals*. If it please God to make it an instrument of doing a little good, I hope I shall be humbly thankful to that gracious Being who supported me in writing it. This is the praise I desire; if this be granted, I shall meet censure cheerfully, conscious that I can do nothing of myself.

I was amused with a letter the other day, from a delightful friend of your's and mine. He was in a large company, in which a *don* lady said, 'Hannah More's new book will cause a revolution in the country.' He answered, 'Madam, I wish we had

Digitized by Google

many such revolutionists; but how do you mean?' 'Why,' replied she, 'by letting the poor know that the great have faults.'

To this curious criticism I have three answers. 1st. The poor will never see the book. 2ndly. They must be very dull if they have not found out the faults alluded to before. 3dly. When I wrote for the poor, I only spoke of *their* faults, and kept those of the great out of sight, and in each story introduced a most exemplary clergyman, and none but such. Pray tell me how the book is received in your circle.

As I am resolved to find *some* faults with your letters, I must tell you that I always lose some words under the seal, from your not allowing paper enough, the only thing in which you are a niggard.

The horse is recovered; how kind to think of such little things! It falls in however with my own notion, that it is in little things that the spirit of friendship is seen.

Whenever your ladyship is disposed to bestow half an hour upon me, it will be a real pleasure, and some indemnification for the uninteresting, but I trust not altogether unuseful letters, I almost daily receive and write. But HE, in whose hands are the hearts of all men, can make the meanest efforts turn to some profit.

My love to dear Millicent. May God bless your unwearied labours for her intellectual and spiritual improvement. She that is well educated for time is also well educated for eternity. I enclose this to

Digitized by Google

our dear friend at Kensington Gore. I hope he will send it you before it is stale. My sisters present their best respects.

With my fervent prayers for your present comfort and eternal happiness, I remain, dearest Lady Olivia,

Your truly grateful and affectionate,

H. More.

Among the several instances of mortality which have already occurred since the year began, not one has affected me more than the death of my old friend Mrs. —— of St. James's; she was a lively exemplification of my 'good sort of people.'

Barley Wood, Jan. 21.—Yesterday was the anniversary of the death of my earliest friend, Mr. Garrick, and of poor Louis Seize; to-morrow will be that of Mr. Pitt. There is a sort of mournful profit in these periodical returns.

From Mrs. H. More to the Miss Roberts's.

February, 1813.

My dear Friends,

I should have answered your kind letter sooner, but for the multitude of disagreeable ones which duty, not inclination, have extorted from me. I have at last snatched up my pen, with a resolution to write, if it be but a few lines, for I have a new impediment to all employment. In addition to my now general bad health, I have had a renewal of that dreadful pain in my teeth, from which I suf-

Digitized by Google

fered so exquisitely three years ago. I have paroxysms of twenty-four hours, little short of delirium. In the long catalogue of my pains, I find this the least supportable.

I am sorry to begin in such a lamenting strain, but shall proceed, I hope in better spirits, when I get a few minutes' interval.

We were very sorry to lose the expected gratification of seeing you this spring, but as a pleasant prospect is the next best thing to present enjoyment, we must be content to look forward to the autumn, if it please God to spare our lives so long.

I am glad you are not dissatisfied with renewing in print, your acquaintance with the book to which you were so kindly helpful in MS.[1]

I confess that there are many things in this work which must necessarily hurt, and I fear offend, persons for whom I feel a great regard, and who will not easily forgive painful truths. To my great surprise, such is human blindness, some of the most worldly people I know, affect to commend and admire it. What is the general opinion, I have no means of knowing, as of course the letters I receive are all kind and encouraging. If it does any, even a little good, that is the true praise, and the only praise a Christian should covet. I have committed the work to God.

I had ordered my bookseller to send me 'Rokeby,' as soon as it might be had for twelve shillings, but my kind Lady Olivia Sparrow sent me

[1] Christian Morals.

Digitized by Google

the costly quarto. It is as dear as bread. Two guineas for four hours' reading! Like every thing of Scott's, it shows the hand of a master, and abounds with beautiful descriptions, lovely images, and many felicities of expression; but we have had all this so often from his exuberant pen, that they begin to lose the gloss of novelty. The great complaint I have to make in the present instance, is the want of interest, in which important point it appears to me not only inferior to the 'Lady of the Lake,' but to his preceding poems.

I was much delighted with your report of Mr. ——. What a blessing will he be to his family and his parish! I trust Lady —— will be a confirmed and exemplary Christian. Her rank, her vast fortune, her fascinating manners, sweet person, and engaging understanding, will serve to recommend religion to those who will not swallow the pill till it is covered with much leaf gold. She attaches herself to me with great affection, and has all the attractions which in return inspire attachment. May it please God to bless you both, and direct you in all your thoughts, words, and actions.

I am ever, my dear friends,

Your very affectionate,

H. More.

Digitized by Google

From Mr. Stephen to Mrs. H. More.

Great Ormond Street, 1813.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Your 'Christian Morals' have produced one effect opposite to your general purpose; for your obliging attention to me in sending them, has, like former favours of the same kind, excited in me some vain emotions which I am too prone to indulge. But if vanity is a bad feeling, gratitude is a good one; and while you have made one person vain, you have made two grateful; for Mrs. S. feels not less sensibly than myself our joint obligation for your kind and valuable present. But here again you have occasioned some *wrongness*, as she calls it, for your books arriving when I was going out to dinner on Saturday, it was in vain that I asked her to practise a little self-denial, and not to open them till my return, that we might start fair together. She took advantage of my absence most contumaciously; and what is worse, it was hard to get a glance at the first volume yesterday, without looking over her shoulder. I hope, however, that before she gets to the end of the second, she will find some hints about temperance in our favourite gratifications, and even a word or two about conjugal duty.

I was a little alarmed at what you say in your preface, of 'the art to stop,' till I found it did not end in the denunciation of which it seemed to be the prelude. You have not yet taken express leave

Digitized by Google

of the public, and therefore are bound in decorum to appear again.

I admit that that same art to stop is a very important one; and well would it be for some of us parliamentary speakers, if we could attain it. But it is an art which every author and authoress in the present times may acquire in the easiest way imaginable. It is only to look at the balance of your bookseller's account. Johnson truly says, a bookseller is the author's best patron. I maintain he is also in this case the best monitor; and had Horace dealt with Cadell, he would have had no need of that invisible friend who sounded in his ears *solve senescentem*, &c. if it had really been time for him to sing no more. I do not desire you to apply this commercial test on a commercial principle; but humbly submit that if it was irrational in your friend the Welsh clergyman to think he was mending the world by a sermon of which half a dozen copies only were sold, it would not be less so to suppose the public neither mended nor pleased by a work which it is buying by thousands. If you can make us better, your pen will be well employed, whether you please us or not. On the other hand, if you please us by a work like this, it will certainly be to our profit. I feel angry with those who dissuaded you from bribing us with another novel. But some good comes out of that evil. They have made the criterion on which I still dare to rely, unequivocally sound.

For my own part I could almost venture to advise you, (were it not presumption in me to advise at all

Digitized by Google

in such a case,) to continue to write, as long as you find the pleasure in doing so superior to the pain of the effort. I doubt much whether in works of that class to which your pen is now dedicated, age takes away from the qualifications of the author so much as it adds, until the decay of our intellectual powers is so sensibly felt by ourselves as to make the labour of composition overpower the wish to propagate our opinions. I regard that wish as instinctive; as a propensity implanted in us by the same benignant Providence which has given to the capsuls of certain plants an explosive force at their maturity, to scatter their seeds extensively around them. It is felt the more strongly late in the autumn of life, before our vivid hue of intellect has faded, before the progressive accumulation of our thoughts, the foliage of the mind, has fallen, and it continues while we have still any useful lessons of experience and reflection to impart; nor wholly ceases until memory and our powers of communication are in a great degree impaired. Hence the characteristic of *narrative* old age. In minds that never were strong, it becomes a foible. Yet even with them it is often a source of traditionary knowledge; which in the ruder stages of society, and in the humbler walks of life, is not unproductive of useful effects.

In minds of a superior order, framed for contemplation and discovery, and endowed with persuasive, or strong communicative powers, this propensity is, I believe, stronger in degree, and more durable in its influence, as well as more

Digitized by Google

beneficial in its effects. I mean, of course, when religious or moral principle has given to it a right direction. And after all, how far does experience bear out that apprehension which you seem to have imbibed! I can remember several writers who have been discredited by beginning too early, but not, at this moment, any who have been so by stopping too late. Of Johnson, Young, and others it may be affirmed that their reputation would be less, if they had not written in old age. I am naturally reminded here of Young, whose 'Night Thoughts,' (my favourite work) was composed, I think, in his latest years; because I was relieved on Saturday evening by recollecting that to have been the case. Being in a prosing humour just now, and supposing you to be fond of literary anecdote, I will give you the story. I was dining in a parliamentary party with Lord Castlereagh, and he produced for our amusement in the evening, some volumes of original letters, curiously preserved by Lady C. Perhaps you know of, or have seen the collection, which her ladyship derived (through Lady Buckinghamshire, I think) from the Duchess of Suffolk, to whom they had all been addressed. When his lordship shewed us the index, comprising the names of all the wits and great men of the last age, my curiosity was immediately fixed by that of Dr. Young. I professed my enthusiastic admiration of his 'Night Thoughts,' and begged to see and admire as a relic, the original letter of such a man. My request was immediately complied with, with a

Digitized by Google

significant smile; and what had I the mortification to read? *Horresco referens!* It was the most fawning, servile, mendicant letter, perhaps, that ever was penned by a clergyman, imploring the mistress of George the Second to exert her interest for his preferment!! It was of course laughed at very heartily. But I had the consolation to find in the letter, among his mean pleas of former adulation to the Royal Family, in his works, &c. a notice of his being fifty years old; and to recollect that the 'Night Thoughts' were written many years later, with confessions of former ambition and preferment-hunting, which he professed, I dare say sincerely, to have abandoned, and to look back on with shame!

But I am trying your patience too severely, and shewing you that I hold cheap the art to stop, for a very common reason perhaps, because it is an art of which I am ignorant.

Mrs. S. desires me to send her grateful and affectionate remembrances to you and your sisters. Pray also give my kind respects to them, and believe me with great respect,

My dear Madam,

Very sincerely your's,

JAMES STEPHEN.

Digitized by Google

From Sir W. W. Pepys to Mrs. H. More.

Wimpole Street, March 31, 1813.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You are too well acquainted with the ceremonial between the judge and the elephant, who came both at the same time into a circuit town, which the judge settled by waiting first on the elephant, not to follow, as you have done, so good an example. I have long been in hopes of a letter from you; but as I considered your kind present on 'Christian Morality' in the light of an apostolic epistle, I was not sure that you might not intend it to supply the place of a letter. I have read it with great pleasure, and, I trust, with advantage; though I confess the sensation of self-dissatisfaction, which all your writings leave upon my mind, however salutary, is rather humiliating and painful. I approve the style in which it is written, as less redundant in metaphor than your former work, and therefore better adapted, perhaps, to the solemnity of the subject; though, at the same time, I am sorry to lose the delight which I never fail to receive from your use of the metaphor, which *never* changes in your hands, as it does in those of some conjurors I know, from a ring to a purse, from a knife to a guinea. You and Burke are the only two persons I know who can safely be trusted with a metaphor; and it may be said of you, as I once heard a man say of him, while he was pouring forth

Digitized by Google

torrents of eloquence in the House of Commons, 'How closely that fellow reasons in metaphor!'

It is very pleasant to see by your letter, that we have been for some time past reading exactly the same books; and I do not see why two friends may not enjoy the consciousness of both being employed at a distance on the same book; as well as two lovers, that of both looking at the same time on the moon. Your observations, too, on them correspond exactly with my own.

Many thanks for your kind congratulations on my dear S——'s marriage. She is really a charming creature, with one of the best hearts and most cultivated minds I have ever known. What you say of Lady O. S. has raised in me a strong desire to be acquainted with her, but I have not yet arrived at that happy state of confidence which would enable me to say, as a Frenchman once said to me, *J'ai cru que vous seriez charmé de ma compagnie.* A sentence which I much question whether the vainest Englishman could pronounce.

Your complaint of the dampness of churches is not only well-founded, but of so important and serious a nature, that I think you cannot do a better service to religion, or at least to religious people, than to take an opportunity in some of your next publications, (which are sure of being universally read,) of descanting on that subject, and of recommending, as somebody well said, that the old alliance between the *Aris* and the *Focis* should be restored. In recommending to you this subject, I do full as well methinks, as a gentleman I knew,

Digitized by Google

who, when I asked him how he liked the subject of a sermon which was very abstruse, answered that he had rather hear him preach against the crime of putting alum into bread. A propos of abstruse subjects for sermons,—I shall certainly, at your recommendation, read some more of Horsley's; but must own that I have been deterred from it, upon finding that one of them was upon the place in which our Saviour passed the interval between his crucifixion and resurrection. Such subjects as these are better left untouched, because every one sees that the most learned theologian and the convert of yesterday, must be equally uninformed upon them. I did read, and did, I confess, experience great disappointment in reading, his attempt to shew what part of our Saviour's discourses applied to the destruction of Jerusalem, and what to his coming at the end of the world. His disposing of the principal difficulty, by applying it to Judas Iscariot, appears to me very forced and improbable. Horsley was, however, the right sort of man to grapple with those and similarly difficult passages; and I am truly sorry that I could not obtain from him more satisfaction, for you cannot rank him among

> 'Those commentators who dark meanings shun,
> But hold their farthing candle to the sun.'

As to his explanation of the 45th Psalm, as I have no better to offer, I must be content with it, though the meaning which he annexes to it does seem very strange. I have often lamented, that

Digitized by Google

instead of giving the *whole* book of Psalms to be read in churches, which habituates the people, as well as the priest, to repeat daily what they no more understand than if it were Arabic, our ancestors did not make a copious *selection* of those divine passages, so feelingly adapted to every state of mind, and so expressive of the most pure and most exalted devotion.

I hear from Mrs. Dickenson, and indeed from every body, how delightfully you are situated, and how hospitably you receive your friends, so that, were I ever to be within reach of you, I should make no more scruple of presenting myself at your gate, than a pilgrim would have had in throwing himself upon the hospitality of my Lady Abbess.

Pray convey my congratulations to Dr. ——, when you see him, upon his marriage, though they will have but little effect, he is so used to them; as a lady once said to me, when I was going to give her away to her *third* husband, and told her that she ought not to appear in such high spirits, but look timid and apprehensive; 'matrimony is like a cold bath; very formidable the first time; but when you have tried it often, you become used to it.'

Cadell promises two more volumes of Mrs. M.'s letters; but from what I can learn, they will not come out immediately. If I had had to advise on the former publication, I should have suggested that as some of the letters could have been written by very few except Mrs. Montagu; none ought to have been admitted, which *any* body could have

Digitized by Google

written as well as Mrs. Montagu. But the editor is under great difficulties, for it often happens that some brilliant passages are so intermixed with headaches, &c. which occupy the rest of the letter, that it is hardly possible to detach the embroidery from the cloth. You, therefore, whose letters will hereafter be sought after with great avidity, should so write, that the subjects, though familiar, should be always interesting; and though it might spoil your letters, were you to write them with a view to publication, yet I would not have you totally lose sight of the possibility of such a thing taking place. 'Why don't you wear your ring, my dear?' says a father, in some play, to his daughter: 'Because, papa, it hurts me when anybody squeezes my hand;' 'What business have you to have your hand squeezed?' 'Certainly not, but still you know, papa, one would like to keep it in *squeezable order*.

As I trust you never fail to repeat every day, every year, my favourite lines in the beginning of Dryden's 'Flower and the Leaf,' I will say nothing about this delicious spring weather; but will only add, which I am sure you feel with me, that nothing excites in me so strong an emotion of gratitude, as that sense of the gracious and beneficent protection of providence, which has permitted me once more, in health and prosperity, to see the reviviscence of these his glorious works. Remember Beattie, and the beautiful apostrophe in the Minstrel, and

Believe me, always,

Most faithfully yours,

W. W. Pepys.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. Siddons to Mrs. H. More.

April 28, 1813.

MY DEAR MADAM,

When I think on the time which has elapsed since I received your last favour, I fear you must think me a most insensible and ungrateful woman; but indeed I am neither; believe me, my dear Madam, I am truly alive to the honour you have conferred upon me, and *profoundly* grateful for the benefit I have derived from it. This you would have heard long before, but I have been exceedingly hurried for the last three months by unavoidable business. I promised myself a very uncommon pleasure in paying my respects to you, during my stay at Mendip Lodge this summer, and long to tell you, face to face, that I am with the utmost admiration and respect,

My dear Madam,

Your ever grateful
and affectionate servant,
S. SIDDONS.

Soon after the publication of 'Christian Morals,' the family circle was for the first time broken, after the sisters had lived together fifty years, by the death of Mrs. Mary More, the eldest, who had been some time in a declining state, and who crowned a life of uncommon usefulness, integrity, and benevolence, by an old age of placid and dignified serenity, and a death full of hope and resignation.

Digitized by Google

Extract of a letter from Mrs. H. More to Lady O. B. Sparrow.

Barley Wood, April 22, 1813.

The solemn scene is closed. My dear eldest sister is escaped from this world of sorrow, and is, I humbly trust, through the mercies of her God, and the merits of her Saviour, translated to a world of peace, where there will be neither sin, sorrow, nor separation. Her desire to be gone, (when she had the use of her reason,) was great. We had all of us the melancholy satisfaction to see her breathe her last. I thought it something blessed to die on Easter Sunday,—to descend to the grave on the day when Jesus triumphed over it.

It is pleasant to see death without its terrors. We visit the cold remains twenty times a day, and I am dividing my morning between the contemplation of her serene countenance, and reading my favourite Baxter's Saints' Rest.

Your ever faithful and affectionate,

H. More.

From Mrs. H. More to the Rev. Mr. Collinson.

Barley Wood.

My dear Sir,

Allow me to return you my best thanks for your kind remembrance of me in sending me your valuable work. You justly conceive Hooker to be a great favourite of mine. Setting aside the ines-

Digitized by Google

timable importance of the subject on which he treats, he is so very fine a writer, that I am often astonished at the *little*, I had almost said, at the *no* progress we have made in composition, and in the improvement of the English language, since his day. I am ashamed that almost three centuries have done no more for us in this very circumstance, on which we of this day so much value ourselves—the article of fine writing.

I approve much of your judgment in bringing forward these excellent old writers. Hooker is a proper successor to 'Thuanus.' Your valuable 'Analysis' will, I trust, do great good to others, as the publication does great credit to yourself.

I sincerely congratulate you on such a patronage as that of the Bishop of Durham. It is honourable to you, and I am very glad that the very fine situation in which he has placed you, is so busy a one as will call out all the energies of your mind and all the exertions of your piety. May it please God to give you his grace, that you may fill your important station with zeal and faithfulness to the souls of those committed to your trust! This, I am sure, is the best prayer I can offer up for you.

I beg to be kindly remembered to Mrs. Collinson, in which my sisters desire to unite.

With much regard, I remain,
My dear Sir,
Your very obliged and faithful,
H. More.

Digitized by Google

From the Rev. R. C. Whalley to Mrs. H. More.

Sidmouth, 1813.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

You will think me lost, or at least that my affections are; yet not so; they are only like one of those streams we have heard of, that run for a while in a concealed channel, and then spring up in a distant place, but are indeed the very same. Thus I suddenly make my appearance at Sidmouth, and I hope you'll discover and acknowledge in me, when this reaches you, the same pure and sincere attachment and regard that has won for me the great privilege and happiness of your friendship, and is of a nature, I trust, to be always recognized and distinguished from the soiled and self-seeking spirit of the world's attachments. If all this is too flowery, correct it, and when you have put it into the plainest and properest dress, I shall still claim it as my own. Well, here I am at length, by the bounty and mercy of God, and almost beyond my expectation and hope; for the premature winter, and my own imprudence in going on with duty at Chelwood, laid me suddenly up, and I was so ill for about ten days as to be confined up stairs, and obliged to go through a course of medicine, and with but a faint prospect at the time, of being allowed to put my project of coming hither in execution. However, the week before last I did boldly; (for it was boldness, considering the state of my health and the state of the weather,) I sat out, and resting

Digitized by Google

a day at Wells at Mr. Tudway's, proceeded towards this place, where a lodging, &c. had been prepared for me, and where I am now tolerably settled and recovered from the effects of a cold I took upon the road, so far as to be able to walk out a little when the sun shines, and to have been at church on Sunday afternoon. I can judge nothing yet as to the effect this change of air and situation will have upon me, but my chief expectation is from the entire exemption it affords me from the exertion of my lungs in duty during the cold season, which of itself seems sufficient to destroy me, without great care. Here I know nobody, and cannot be so much tempted to expose myself to what is prejudicial to my health, either from zeal to benefit the souls of my fellow creatures, or affection for their persons and company. A wretched exemption after all for one who hath tasted of God's grace, and known the comfort and blessing of walking in love; but so it pleases God, and I ought to find joy and comfort in submitting to His will. God is everywhere, and can and will give comfort to his afflicted people and supply all their wants. If we could but depend upon him more firmly than we do, we should feel ourselves more effectually and sensibly supported. I am living in a room about ten feet long, large enough to contain me and the Bible; but as I suppose I shall go very little out, I could wish to be able to expatiate more within; nevertheless the mind can range and look to a time of escape from all confinement, when she will mount up on eagles' wings and look at the sun for ever,

Digitized by Google

with glorified organs fitted for that vision. O come the day, when you and I, by God's mercy and great power, and all that long for him, shall be for ever with him! But while we are here, may we be comfortably here, and have so much health as to enable us to be useful. This certainly is my object in removing hither, and one balm I had to assuage the pain of it, was seeing the unaffected tears of many of the souls committed to me, when I took my leave of them, which I would have done individually of every inhabitant of the parish with prayer, had not my illness put a stop to it.

Another balm which has reached me since my arrival here, is the hearing, by Lady Waldegrave, that you have written to her a more comfortable account of your own and your sister's health, than she has yet had from you; indeed, her whole letter is a cordial, and evidently tinctured with divine grace, written with a more cheerful satisfied piety than usual; and may God make me thankful for this additional friend.

I wrote to S——, after I got home from you, the kindest and most useful letter I could devise; but I suppose he could not relish it or understand the love that was in it. I hear he took refuge from his affliction with Mr. C——, at H——, but I do not learn this from his own pen, for he has not answered me. Oh, my dear Madam, there is little hope, when after all sorts of warnings and providential voices, we find the very dregs and husks of the world preferred and still relished; but after all, let us pray!

Digitized by Google

You will remember me to all your sisters; I hope God will preserve you still long together for the good of many, and for the comfort and benefit of me among the rest, if so be it should please God to bring me back into your neighbourhood. In the mean time you can bring yourselves to *me* with pen and ink, and we can always commune with each other on the tables of the heart. God Almighty be with you all, and bless you with his presence and spiritual blessing always.

Your's ever affectionately,

R. C. WHALLEY.

From Mrs. H. More to Lady Olivia Sparrow.

Barley Wood, 1813.

MY DEAR LADY OLIVIA,

I deprecate your scanty allowance of paper—a crowded margin—valuable words effaced by the seal, maugre my remonstrances! Desire dear Millicent to make you a present of a quire, to be solely dedicated to me in a handsome and liberal manner. Your last letter was particularly pleasant to me, as it arrived while Mr. Whalley was staying near a week with us, and I could gratify him with such portions of it as were likely to afford him pleasure. As we fetched and carried him back, the inclement season did him no harm. I never saw him so well. You contributed still farther to his gratification, for I reserved for our evening reading, till he came, the 2nd vol. of Dr. Clarke, as I knew

Digitized by Google

all that part which related to Palestine would be, as it proved, highly interesting to him. He was quite cheered by exchanging his solitude for a little society. Now I have finished these travels, I must repeat my thanks for the instruction and amusement with which you have enriched our winter evenings, with your varied and exhaustless kindness. Rokeby I have now read myself. I find it abounding in beauties of description, and felicities of expression; but still it preserves, in my eyes, the radical fault, both of want of interest, and in some parts, of intelligibility in the story. Remember, I only presume to find any defect, in comparing this with his preceding work. You will find, as it has been pointed out to me, that in Canto IV. page 185, 186, &c. the circumstance of Mortham's stabbing his wife in her brother's arms, is precisely the same as the catastrophe in a Legendary Tale, called Sir Eldred of the Bower, written by an unworthy friend of yours.

I always feel gratified when I hear of your being with any friend or favourite of mine: I seem in spirit to make one among you. For Mr. W——, I feel a particular interest: there is something in his history, character, and turn of mind, that engages my affection strongly. His feelings are too exquisite for his peace, but they are absorbed by the best objects. With all his warmth, his views of religion are uncommonly sound, and perfectly scriptural. He has great difficulties to contend with from his worldly connexions; I therefore rejoice when he makes any acquisition of pious friends. I

Digitized by Google

have told him you will be a gainful acquaintance to him.

My heart rejoices at the progress of religious society—wide, and more wide the blessed circle spreads in the elevated walks of life. Mr. J. Weyland's house, I trust, will be a new sort of centre for attracting the piously-disposed who want support, encouragement, and congenial society; for it is a hard case that people must either live in a crowd, or in solitude; man, who is a social animal, is driven to become a gregarious one, if he neglects to cultivate his internal resources, and to search out religious friends. What extensive good has Mr. Wilberforce done among young persons of fashion, by the intellectual and religious intercourse of his family.

A few elegant quiet houses, where inquiring minds know they shall meet *good* company, in the best sense of the word; where their good breeding will be brought into no suspicion, and their good sense into no discredit, would, I am sure, fortify the minds and cheer the spirits, as well as confirm the principles of many. I know that many have been deterred from the society of religious persons, by some want of discretion or delicacy, which they have been glad to magnify, in order to get quite out of the connexion. I am, however, aware that all one's prudence is not sufficient to clear away the charge of enthusiasm, which the world is ever watching for an occasion to bring forward against those who exhibit a more than ordinary degree of strictness; but this they must be content

Digitized by Google

to bear for their *Great Master*, who bore so much for them.

I like much your details of persons and things; pray do not spare them, they let me into the state of that society in which I passed so many years. Pray have you seen Mrs. Siddons. I wish to know how she goes on. I forbore sending her Christian Morals, lest she should think I was besieging her. Perhaps I did wrong. What says your Ladyship?

I never write long letters but to you. I have been for the last month more than usually ill, and was scarcely able to speak, some days, while Mr. Whalley was here. I had, however, the comfort to reflect that it is better to be dumb than deaf in his company.

How did you find our good friend, Lord Gambier? I have written this at different times—my head-aches have rendered writing painful. I am better to-day, and my hopes, which had sunk very low, revive at the idea of our meeting once more in this world.

Adieu, my dear Lady Olivia. Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might! May he bless you, and give you grace for the important part he has called you to fill.

Your's most faithfully,
and affectionately,
H. More.

In the summer of this year (1813) Mrs. More visited her friend Lady Olivia Sparrow, at her seat in Huntingdonshire. It was now becoming an

Digitized by Google

effort to her to make long journies, and her determination had been formed to desist from such undertakings. Repeated attacks of severe indisposition, although her mind resisted their effects, and seemed to come out from them a gainer in strength, and more advanced in the Christian walk and character, had made serious impressions on her constitution, originally slight, and easily disordered. The attractions of this invitation induced her to venture from her home, with a frame for which home was the proper asylum. She reached her friend's house, but it was only to keep her apartment under a fresh seizure, which unfitted her for society during the greater part of the month she remained there. From this illness, however, she so far recovered as to proceed on a journey into Kent, to visit Lord Barham, an old and much-valued friend. In her way thither she stopped a few days with Mr. Henry Hoare, at Mitcham, whose name none can hear who knew his qualities, without that tribute of feeling which is due to the Christian example he bequeathed. He was "a rich man furnished with ability, living peaceably in his habitation." He was a rich man, a negociator in riches, but had his treasure in heaven, and his heart where his treasure was. It was at his house that Mrs. More heard of the death of Lord Barham—a Christian nobleman, and one of those of whose character she carried with her an affectionate remembrance to the last hour in which her recollection remained to her. He had visited Mrs. More in the summer of 1812, and although then beyond

Digitized by Google

his eightieth year, had gone with her the round of her schools, and her other beneficent institutions, with a briskness in the cause of humanity which had in it the promise of years and active continuance. But this year, like every other in the remaining life of Hannah More, lengthened the long list of her bereavements; now a sister, now a friend, now a pleasant correspondent; till the whole of one age disappeared from before her, and the vacancies of her early associates were filled by a new generation, whose infancy had felt, and whose maturity confessed the benefits of her lessons and her example.

These incidents and particulars may be to some superfluous and insipid; but those who delight in the vicinity of virtue, will love to tread as much as may be in the track and footsteps of this great and godly woman; to wait upon her goings out and her comings in, upon her couch of sickness, upon her walks of charity, upon her visits of kindness, and to move along the circuit of that Christian society of which Hannah More was the nucleus and the centre.

Before she left the neighbourhood of London she passed a few days at the houses of Mr. Henry Thornton and Mr. Wilberforce, in what manner, and with what pleasure and profit may be easily conceived. In her fragile state, every distant visit seemed so like the last, that a deeper interest on that account was probably attached to it, and gave it a mellower and softer impression.

On her progress homeward she made Strawberry Hill, then the residence of Lady Waldegrave, to

Digitized by Google

whom it would be injustice as well as to Mrs. More not to mention their mutual affection, and the gardens of Hampton, once so dear to her—the farewell scenes of her tour. It was a journey that served the cause that was so near her heart, by exhibiting to those who shared her society in the course of her progress, a specimen of that corrective wisdom which religion produces, of the inward and outward grace which it communicates, and of the harmony, proportion, and order which it spreads over the whole composition of the character; whether it appears in the manners, the sentiments, or the expressions; in the reciprocities of friendship, or in the commerce of companionship.

From Mrs. H. More to Lady Olivia Sparrow.

July, 1813.

If I have not written to you, my dearest Lady Olivia, since the day we reached Mitcham Grove, it has not been through want either of affection or gratitude, but because I literally have not had one quarter of an hour unoccupied by sickness, or travelling, or company. While I was last writing to you, I felt myself extremely unwell, but did not expect that in the week I staid at Mr. Hoare's I should only take one meal with the family. So it pleased God; it pleased him also to raise me up again; and as soon as I was able, we removed for two days only to Battersea Rise. There I saw some interesting persons and valued friends; but the visit was too transient to allow as much inter-

Digitized by Google

course as we wished. I did not dare prosecute our intended journey into Kent, and I hope Mrs. Porteus was tolerably satisfied with my reasons for declining a visit which I feared might have again made me a burden when I wished to afford pleasure. We went to Kensington Gore, and Mr. Wilberforce returned from the funeral of my revered old friend at Barham Court just in time to receive us. We would not be prevailed on to stay more than two days; but in that short space their kindness enabled us to see an almost incredible number of friends, the greater part of whom I had never expected to see again till we should meet in a better world.

Though we were obliged to drive through Hyde Park, I kept my resolution of not entering London. As I called on no one there, no one could say they were specially neglected.

We took Strawberry Hill in our way, and spent one night with Lady Waldegrave, who was as thankful for our short visit as if we had conferred on her some mighty obligation. She was more cheerful than usual. That well-known spot recalled to my mind a thousand recollections, partly pleasing, but more painful. The same feelings were excited in us as we called afterwards at Mrs. Garrick's (we did not find her). The library, the lawn, the temple of Shakspeare, all of which I *would* see for the last time! What wit, what talents, what vivacity, what friendship, had I enjoyed in both these places! Where are they now? I have been mercifully spared to see the vanity and emptiness of every thing that is not connected with eternity;

Digitized by Google

and seeing this, how heavy will my condemnation be, if I do not lay it to heart!

We had a good journey home, and the comfort of finding all pretty well, and our little spot blooming as Eden. We have been at home only a few hours, but my heart yearned to thank you for all your kindness. Your letter followed me hither. I pray God to bless you and yours.

Ever most affectionately,

H. More.

From Mrs. H. More to Mrs. King.

September 10, 1813.

My dear Madam,

I fear I must have suffered the imputation of incivility and ingratitude in not having sooner thanked you for your very kind remembrance of me, in sending me your new work, which, by some blunder of the bookseller, I have but very lately received. Though I have not yet had time to peruse one half of it, I have read enough to be very much pleased with it. The thought was a happy one, and now you have worked it out, it strikes me with wonder that it was never adopted before. The pleasing manner in which you have treated the subject, and the familiar illustrations you have made use of, will, I trust, render it both interesting and useful to the general reader, and particularly to that class of readers for which you particularly designed it.

You have doubtless heard of the breach which death has made in our family. My poor sister suffered

Digitized by Google

much from long weakness, but her end was calm and resigned, and I trust her exchange a happy one. She was not only willing but at last desirous to depart, so that our sorrow was mingled with much consolation. My own health and that of my sister Patty is broken and infirm, yet we are still, except in severe weather, able to attend our schools; we keep up about seven hundred children, besides receiving the parents who attend in the evening. Our teachers were mostly bred up by ourselves, so that our plans were pretty well maintained.

After having spent thirty-five winters in London, I have never ventured thither since my last great illness; and indeed I had entirely renounced all idea of another long journey. I was, however, seduced by my delightful friend Lady Olivia Sparrow, in the spring, to make her a visit at her seat in Huntingdonshire. Our enjoyment was a good deal impaired by my being severely ill for a fortnight. When I grew better I yielded to the entreaties of my dear old friend Lord Barham, to extend my journey into Kent, to pay him a last visit. Patty and I set out, and were within twenty miles of Barham Court, when the news of his unexpected death stopped us short. It was an awful and instructive lesson! We spent a few days with Mr. Wilberforce, &c. but I did not venture to enter London. I had too many friends there, and was afraid of the bustle, late hours, &c.

We have been a little overdone with company this summer. The more I endeavour to retire from the world, the more new acquaintance and addi-

Digitized by Google

tional visitors seem to introduce themselves at Barley Wood. I have, however, the satisfaction of finding a great increase of piety, especially in the higher classes; let us pray that this may be daily multiplied. We are led to expect a new work from the pen of Mr. Collinson.

Your's most faithfully,

H. More.

From Mrs. H. More to Lady Olivia Sparrow.

November 23, 1813.

My dear Lady Olivia,

A severe bilious attack, which has lasted three weeks with very few intermissions, has prevented my writing, though in debt to you for a kind and pleasant letter. I know not where this will find you, but wherever it does, I hope it will find you well and happy. I enter into your feelings on reaching home, which is always endeared by absence.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilberforce and their two daughters spent a week with us; it was to have been a fortnight, but he was called away. It was delightful to have him to oneself, at least of an evening; by day we generally had company. Our dear Dean staid a night with us. You know our dimensions, and can judge how we were crammed.

It was a delight to see those two young men of quality, P—— and R——, adorning their sacred profession by the most sincere and fervent piety. Each will be a blessing in the district where he is providentially stationed. Our Dean, not

Digitized by Google

satisfied with preaching to an overflowing cathedral in the morning, has instituted an evening lecture in the parish church, where he himself preaches to near 2000 auditors; people go seven or eight miles to hear him. Though I shall grieve to lose him, yet it is a comfort to think that he will in all probability be a bishop, when he will have a much larger scope, power, and patronage.

I believe I told you that Mr. Owen had spent some time with us. I am impatient to hear that that worthy, ill-used man, has got some preferment. If I were to choose for him, it should be a *prebend* rather than a *parish*, that he might with more propriety and impunity follow his *Bible vocation*, for the promotion of which he is so eminently gifted.

To him succeeded R. G—— and two of his sisters. Our last very interesting guest was Colonel M——, a first-rate man, and whom, on account of his vast oriental literature, sound principles, general knowledge, and local information, Dr. Buchanan has pronounced to be the only man who is capable of prosecuting his (Buchanan's) important religious investigations in the east. He does not seem unwilling to lend himself to this great object, but the plague in the Levant has prevented him hitherto. He has also a letter from Lord Wellington, earnestly desiring him to join him in the Peninsula. He was his Aid-de-camp in India; his life has been most extraordinary; I am persuading him to write it: four years captive in one of Tippoo's dungeons, or with another officer, a prisoner like

Digitized by Google

himself, chained to his back! He is a man of the gentlest manners, and has brought home, after all his hair-breadth escapes, an ample fortune and a sober mind.

Our friends, the two Miss Roberts's, are spending the dreary month of November with us. With them, they are so good and so amiable, I am under no restraint, sick or well; and they read to us the whole evening, which is a double benefit to me, as it not only gives me information, but saves my talking. I could not forbear gratifying them with your opinion of the last *British Review*.

I am afraid you will think me a sad patriot to have written so much without a word of the glorious news. God grant that all these laurels may conduct us to the olive-branch! My heart overflows with gratitude to Him who breaketh the bow, and snappeth the spear in sunder. On those joyful occasions we are kindly remembered by our friends. Mr. Vansittart, or Mr. Addington, or some one else who has the earliest information, always sends us a gazette extraordinary.

I must love you as well as I do to have written so long a scrawl in so much pain. We can pray for each other, and, if I live, I hope we may still see each other.

Believe me ever, my dear Lady Olivia,
your very faithful,
obliged and affectionate,
H. More.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. H. More to Lady Olivia Sparrow.

Barley Wood, Dec. 27, 1813.

MY DEAREST LADY OLIVIA,

I cannot suffer this holy and gracious season to pass without wishing you not the *compliments*, but the *comforts* of it;—without praying to our heavenly Father to give you all the benefits and blessings it is calculated to bestow. This season seems as if it was meant not only to stir up our devout and pious affections to God, and the most ardent gratitude for the inestimable gift of His Son; but it appears intended also to stir up our warm feelings for our friends, and to quicken our desires for their temporal comforts; but more especially for their spiritual good, for their advancement in grace, for the improvement of their prospects of eternal glory and increased endeavours after it.

There is something beautiful in the union of religion and benevolence, which seems peculiarly to exist at this season. Many whose purses are closed, and whose hearts seem shut, the rest of the year, open, if it be only habitually and mechanically, at Christmas.

I do not dislike even extreme vivacity in children, because when the violence of the animal spirits comes to subside, I would wish to see enough spirit left to make an animated character. Such volatile beings, however, are particularly difficult to manage: still it is more easy to restrain *excess*, than to quicken *inanity*. The most desirable object

Digitized by Google

would be, to get the seeds of true religion planted in this fertile soil, and to get these spirits and passions diverted into another channel. May you, my dearest Lady, be the happy instrument through divine grace, to effect this.

You cheer my very heart when you talk of looking in upon us in the spring. Perhaps you may take us *in your way* from town; it is a little digression to be sure, but so you do but come, I am satisfied. I set my heart upon it. I shall hope to hear in your next, that you are settled with a curate. You have a nice and difficult part to act in this business. You must have *zeal without innovation*.

This phrase reminds me to tell you a story, to account for my being guilty of such a seeming folly as to have had my picture taken. In the wettest day that ever was, good old Mr. Bean, author of the book above named, *walked* down here from Bristol and back again, to ask me to *sit* to his son-in-law, Mr. S——, of Newman-Street, who was then at Clifton. I opposed it with all my might, but in vain. I sat at last to him; but as one sits down to a tooth-drawer. It is small, but they say extremely like, and all Clifton have been sitting to him since. But the worst part is to come, I was forced to consent to its being engraved, without which it could not have been profitable to the painter. It is *such* a folly! at my age too. It has quite mortified me.

The two Miss Roberts's are still with us; but leave next week. They have much enlivened our winter evenings. P. and I have both had a bad

Digitized by Google

winter, from the excessive dampness, so mischievous to bilious habits.

My sisters join in best respects. P. and I often talk with pleasure of our Brampton visit, which you know you *must* return; it is among the *common forms of civility*. I was not sorry Lord Gambier was forced to put off his visit till spring. I hope both my health and the weather will be then better.

Ever your's, my dear Lady Olivia,

H. More.

From Mrs. H. More, to Lady Olivia Sparrow.

June, 1814.

My dearest Lady Olivia,

Whether you are yet arrived at Malvern, or the adventurous Millicent is dragging you over the craggy rocks and mountain heights of Wales, I know not; but I will suppose you are come, and are pouring out successful libations to the nymph of the Malvern mountain; or to speak more like a Christian, I trust God has prospered your journey, and that you are getting a recruit of strength from the two elements which render your place of residence so famous.

We are living more quietly than usual, most of our friends from all quarters being met in one common centre—*Emperor-hunting*. London, I hear, is quite in a state of derangement. The very reading of the accounts makes my head share in the vertigo. I am thankful to be out of reach of it. Nothing

Digitized by Google

under the sun can now repay me for the terror and agitation of a crowd. This is not merely the effect of age, but a constitutional dread of bustle.

I must however prepare for a tiny squeeze at our little annual Wrington Bible-meeting next Tuesday. We shall, I fear, make but a poor figure;—our orators have caught the royal mania, and are all flown to London.

I must treat Millicent with an anecdote received by this post from a person in Paris who saw it.—'During the Bataille de Paris, when the allies were battering the town from the hills of Montmartre, which are close to Paris, a tavern-keeper who has a house on the other side very near, but which he first ascertained was not within reach of cannon shot, wishing to turn a penny, put up a board before his house, on which he wrote in large letters—'*Ici on loue des places pour voir la Bataille.*' If this is not truly French I know not what is. My friend goes on—'Madame de Sevigné would have said—'*Ma fille, si vous ne trouvez pas cela joli, dites mieux.*''

May God bless and restore you, my dearest Lady Olivia. With kind love to Miss Sparrow,

I am yours faithfully and truly,

H. More.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

1814.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I hear poor S—— is in pecuniary difficulties. Though stripped almost bare by the accumulated demands on my slender purse, I must trouble you with the enclosed to add to his subscription. I feel ashamed that I, who have done so little, should be richer than he who has done so much, for the cause of religion.

Lady O. Sparrow has sent me Madame de Stäel's Allemagne. Her observations are frequently just and acute. She possesses a rare combination of talents. I have read the *last* volume *first*, having been told by some of my friends, that there I should see how *religious* she had become. Though I fancy that this volume is the least entertaining of the three, (the others I have not read,) there are in it passages of the greatest beauty, flashes of light bursting through the darkness of those dry German metaphysics, which, I own to my shame, heartily tired me. I really admire her genius so much, that I hate to say any thing disparaging, lest it should look like blindness to her talents, or envy of them. But to speak truth, her religion appears to me of a very questionable sort, or rather a nonentity. She seems to admire its mysteries in common with those of free-masonry: all in a tone of veneration. Its sublimities rank with those of literature, poetry, and the fine arts. Enthusiasm and its excesses, she

Digitized by Google

thinks, do as much good as its more perfect parts. Kant, who is her model of Christian perfection, is a deist. I had this from one of his disciples; for there is, or was two years ago, when I was told this, a Kantian club in London. After my young friend who belonged to it had exhausted himself in praises of his piety, he confessed that he did not think he believed in the Christian Revelation. Most of Madame de Stäel's authors are, I believe, illuminati; and that abominable doctrine of perfectibility, which is the key-stone of her edifice, would do infinite mischief, but that I believe none of the young ladies, and few of the young gentlemen who are in raptures with L'Allemagne, can understand it. I shall feel it right to tell incautious readers that a frequent and even respectful mention of religion may be made by those who are not religious. Her compass of knowledge is prodigious, her language beautiful.

My pen gallops so, I am sure I have written nonsense, but I have no time to revise. We are all desponding about the news. That ever we should live to dread a peace!

Your's most faithfully,
my dear friend,
H. More.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VI.

It must not be supposed, though we have not lately adverted to the subject, that the schools and clubs instituted by Mrs. H. More and her sisters, were suffered to languish, even during the greatest pressure of her literary employments. They continued, indeed, to be blessed with increasing success. The masters and mistresses had been formed in the schools, and thus instruction was made to provide for its own succession and continuance. The acquirements of these teachers were always solid and useful; and some of them, by their enlightened piety, spread the benefit of their example beyond their schools, and edified a neighbourhood in which little was known of Christianity but the name and the profession. The patronesses were much encouraged in their work, by witnessing these effects of their labours. Prejudices were giving way to practical demonstration; the schools were always full, and the most inclement weather seldom deterred even those who lived at a very considerable distance, from attending. The evening readings were likewise much

Digitized by Google

resorted to, the books as usual being selected and supplied by Mrs. H. More and her sister; and admission to the benefit clubs, the funds of which were by careful attention and prudent management growing into a considerable sum, had become an object of universal and eager desire. Nor did these and similar occupations so engross Mrs. H. More's time and thoughts but that a large portion of both was employed in administering consolation to friends in difficult or afflicting circumstances, and in counselling those who resorted to her for advice; in which number were included many young clergymen, desirous of faithfully discharging the duties of their awful office. To persons in this latter predicament, her house was always open, and her advice frankly and freely afforded. To many young curates, whose finances did not enable them to purchase books of divinity, she presented them with a munificent hand; and supplied such persons in several instances with religious periodical publications during a series of years. She likewise laid it down as a principle never to refuse or delay answering any application for epistolary advice; enduring the incessant interruptions caused by the performance of these obligations, with indefatigable kindness; frequently saying that these continual crossings and traversings were so many lessons to teach her to conform herself more to the life of Him "who pleased not himself."

Those who have lived much with Mrs. H. More, will recollect how peculiarly her mind was impressed with the excellences of St. Paul's character, and with

Digitized by Google

what discrimination she was accustomed to descant upon the lustre of his actions and writings. Her thoughts had been gradually teeming upon this subject, till at length her full mind sought the relief which intellectual abundance finds in the freedom of communication. She composed an 'Essay on the character and writings of St. Paul,' in two volumes, and gave it to the public at the end of two years after the publication of her preceding work.

A dreadful termination was nearly put to her labours and her life in the very moment of her completion of this excellent performance. She had retired to her apartment, of which she had locked the door (a thing unusual with her) to exclude interruption, when in reaching across the fire-place to a book-shelf, the end of her shawl caught fire behind, and before she was conscious of the accident, had communicated it to some of her other clothes, so that when her cries had alarmed the family, they beheld her at the head of the stairs, almost enveloped in flames. The instant, however, that she perceived aid approaching, she gently retreated with admirable presence of mind out of the current of air into her chamber, and had the calmness and recollection to abstain from any quick motion; to which composure and self-possession it was chiefly owing that the prompt assistance of one of her friends was successful in extinguishing the flames, before her person had received any material injury.

The general anxiety excited by the imperfect account of this accident in the public papers brought

Digitized by Google

every day an overflowing tide of visits and letters, which could not but be pleasing to one, who with a natural sensibility to kindness, thought it no reproach to enjoy a popularity purchased by efforts to mend the hearts, and correct the conduct of her fellow-creatures. But those who lived in intimacy with her, witnessed the true effects of this incident on her mind, in sanctifying her thoughts, and quickening within her the work of grace. She was frequently heard to repeat the words of the prophet, "When thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flame be kindled upon thee;" and other texts of scripture, with which her memory was stored. The delay occasioned by this accident, to the publication of her Essay on St. Paul, was very trifling; the work was produced, and was received with the same public curiosity and avidity which had attended all her later performances. No sooner was its coming forth announced, than the whole first edition was bespoken, and although the extraordinary events which immediately succeeded, and engrossed the public mind, were unfavourable to the circulation of any work not connected with politics, it reached a fourth edition within two years after its first appearance. A part of the correspondence which had relation to these two events, thus coupled by their coincidence, however different in kind, shall be here produced for the reader's entertainment.

Digitized by Google

Extract of a letter from Mrs. H. More to Lady Olivia Sparrow.

You inquire after St. Paul. He is in progress; but his course is much interrupted by the multitude of letters I receive daily, not from *friends*,—*those* are a refreshment,—but from strangers, many of them impertinent applications, but many which duty and conscience oblige me to answer, though I am a poor casuist, and they might get far better counsel elsewhere. Last week, when *The Apostle* was in his full career, I got a letter from my bookseller, complaining that the legal time for retaining any literary work in the hands of the author, or the bookseller to whom it had been sold, having expired, several booksellers were taking undue advantage of this, and were publishing editions of *The Sacred Dramas*, to *his* no little injury (for I had sold him the copyright). Cadell therefore requested me to help him out of this difficulty, by making some additions to the book; so I threw away my own work, and sat down and wrote him an additional scene to the drama of Moses, in which I make Miriam prophesy the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt: it is a hasty thing. But as this little work is now in the eighteenth edition, it is hard that the purchaser should lose the profit.

P. and I spent a few days at Wells with the Dean. We also visited the Bishop. The former has made a considerable impression in that 'bar-

Digitized by Google

ren and dry land,' and has instituted lectures in distant parishes, in which he preaches himself. But alas! he is now returned to his own Lutterworth. Patty desires me to say every thing for her that unites respect and affection, in which all join. Remember me to your dear young companions, who, I trust, grow in grace, as well as in all mental improvement. Your's ever truly, dearest lady,

H. More.

From Mrs. H. More to Mrs. Kennicott.

Barley Wood, Dec. 16, 1814.

My dear Friend,

I should have thanked you before for your kind letter to Miss Roberts, but as through the great and undeserved kindness of my friends, I received above a hundred letters of inquiry, which I felt utterly unable to answer, and which my sisters and our guests undertook, I wrote to *none* for a time, that I might say with truth, that I had not written.

I consider myself a monument of God's mercy. As I was one sheet of flame before any help arrived, it is supposed that another minute would have rendered it unextinguishable. Many trifling circumstances which appeared to be providentially directed, contributed to my preservation. Being confined with a bad cold, I had, that day only, put on a thick stuff gown, which however, was burnt through the back and sleeves; the day before I wore a muslin gown. I had also on three shawls. The one next me was reduced almost to tinder before it could be got off;

Digitized by Google

of the others little is left. It was in so heroically tearing off these, and taking me, flaming as I was, as if I had been an infant, and laying me on the carpet, that Miss Roberts burnt her hands so terribly. They were healed, however, sooner than my slighter wounds, which are now healed also, and I am able to put on a gown. I am confined with another severe cough, which I ascribe to the damps. What a warning was my late visitation, to keep prepared for a sudden call! Yet I fear that, as usual, I do not turn it to its proper account.

My book will be called, and justly, a presumptuous undertaking. It is *an Essay on the Character and Practical Writings of Saint Paul.* I am sure beforehand of two classes of enemies, the very high Calvinists, and what is called the very high Church party, two formidable bodies; but as I have written, I trust, from my conscience, I shall patiently submit to their different awards. I own the subject is above my strength at best, and now that little strength is of course less. It will be my last attempt. Perhaps you will say a few of its predecessors might have been spared.

I have lived so long, that my legal right to *Sacred Dramas* is extinct, or rather, that of Cadell and Davies, to whom I had sold the work. They wrote in a great hurry, to say that several booksellers had advertised the book in an inferior form, and to beg me to make some additions to it, which would restore to them their right. I refused at first: but they represented to me that as a new edition was in the press, it would be a considerable loss

Digitized by Google

to them, so I have added a scene at the end of Moses. I tell you this, that you may, if it falls in your way, prevent people from purchasing the editions which have not the name of Cadell and Davies.

I have a very lively letter from dear Mrs. Garrick, telling me she is very near ninety-one. I enclose a copy of it for you.

It is a very considerable time since I have written so long a letter. You do not quite deserve it, but as Hamlet says, 'Give every man his due, and who shall 'scape whipping?' Patty's health is still indifferent, she sends her love to all.

Your's affectionately,

H. More.

From Mrs. Garrick to Mrs. H. More.

My dearest Friend,

If you could imagine how much pleasure a letter from you gives me, you would oftener favour me with one. As writing is no trouble to you, you might now and then bestow a moment upon me, to tell me what passes in London; for I am quite unacquainted with the world of folly. I almost thanked God for my illness, during all the time that every person ran mad to see for six weeks together the same thing. Now, if I could have seen the royal strangers with ease, I should have been glad to have seen them; but as that was out of my power, (if I had been in health) as I have almost out-lived

Digitized by Google

my London friends, I have seen nothing, so I must trust to what I am told.

Indeed, my beloved friend, I have been very near parting for ever from this world; but the great care taken of me set me up again upon my feet, but not so high as my knees, for they are as yet very *doddering*. But when you consider that I am six months past ninety, you would say that I am a wonder still if you were to see me. I do not often shew my teeth, as there is but one and a quarter left. God bless you all! and love me, as I do you all, from my very soul.

E. M. GARRICK.

From Mr. Stephen to Mrs. Martha More.

Comberton, Dec. 29, 1814.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Though I have very long delayed to thank you for your obliging letter, I can truly say that I was not insensible of your kindness, or of the honour of receiving a letter from you. Neither has the delay been voluntary. I meant to write in a post or two after I received that favour; but I had heard through others, that the effects of the alarming accident you mentioned were happily removed; I should otherwise have attended to your kind precaution, for there are few whose dangers and sufferings would more interest or agitate my dear Mrs. S's. susceptible and affectionate feelings. Really I could not help envying Miss Roberts her scorched

Digitized by Google

hands, though I am no greater stoic as to bodily pain than my neighbours. I hope no other consequence now remains to her than complacency and thankfulness for the good of which her presence of mind and courage were made the instruments.

When are we to have our new or improved views of St. Paul? With such a subject, and such an artist, we may reasonably be impatient for the exhibition. Does it fall within the plan or general character of the work, to notice the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, and to give any conjecture as to the infirmity alluded to? I have an interpretation of this, which, as far as my reading, or that of Wilberforce's and some others goes, is original; and yet it is admitted by them to be as probable, or more so than any other of the many conjectures they have seen. For my own part, I hold it almost demonstrably the true solution. St. Paul's infirmity was one well known in hot climates, a chronical ophthalmia. Hence he was what is called *blear-eyed*, and was often, perhaps, obliged to wear a shade. It made his personal presence mean; it was a visible infirmity in his flesh; it hindered his usefulness, and therefore he besought the Lord anxiously, that it might depart from him; but was answered, "my grace is sufficient for thee." It made it for the most part painful and difficult for him to write. Hence he generally employed an amanuensis, and regarded it as a great matter when he used his own pen. "You see how large a letter I have written to you with mine own hand." "The salutation of me, Paul, written with my own

Digitized by Google

hand." It is thought that he might abstain from writing to save his strength or time; why then did he work at tent-making? A man who maintained himself by that sedentary labour, might as well have been at his desk, for we cannot suppose that the wages of a journeyman tent-maker were greater than those of an amanuensis. It exposed him to contempt and derision among strangers, and therefore he gives praise to the Galatians, that when he preached the gospel to them at the first through infirmity of the flesh, his temptation, which was in "his flesh, they despised not." That the infirmity was of a bodily kind, seems to me quite indisputable. Doddridge and all the best commentators take that side. It is literally so described: and the calling it a "messenger of Satan," is perfectly consistent with its being a bodily disease. Satan, in fifty places, is represented as the immediate author of corporal defects and maladies. The passages cited, shew it was something visible to others. How could a temptation to a particular sin be so, unless it was complied with? It would be derogatory to the character of the apostle, and even of an Antinomian tendency, to suppose this to have been the case. The Galatians *ought* to have despised him, if in preaching the gospel he had exhibited before them the strength of a temptation by the commission of open sin. They would have deserved no praise for not despising, but the reverse;—i. e. for not despising the temptation, if put for the visible sin, which was its evidence. In short, I am astonished how any pious and judicious

Digitized by Google

commentator should think this "thorn in the flesh," a thorn in the conscience.

If it was bodily, it was also some bodily infirmity of an unsightly appearance, making his "*person*" or aspect "*mean*," and exposing him to contempt. How shall we find a more probable hypothesis to suit those and the other preconceptions? He was not lame—witness his great bodily activity.

Doddridge supposes that the view he had of celestial glories might have affected his nervous system, so as to occasion stammering in his speech, or some ridiculous distortion in his countenance. (Exposition, 2 Cor. xii. 7.) But it is at least equally probable that those heavenly visions, or the supernatural light which blinded him at his conversion, might have left a weakness and disease in the organs immediately affected. It is notorious, that after a severe inflammation in the eyes, they are extremely liable for a long time, or through life, to a return of the complaint. It may be even presumed from analogy, that unless the miracle which restored Paul to sight, removed also a natural secondary effect of the temporary injury the organs had received, there must have been a predisposition afterwards to the complaint which I suppose him to have had. Now that frugality in the use of means, which has been observed even in the miraculous works of God, may be supposed to have permitted that predisposition to remain, it being designed that the apostle, for his humiliation and the exercise of his faith and patience, should have a

Digitized by Google

permanent infirmity of the flesh to struggle with in future life.

The choice of the metaphor by which St. Paul describes his infirmity, also weighs much with me; indeed it first excited my conjecture. The pain of ophthalmia, when severe, exactly resembles the prick of a thorn or pin. I once had it very severely indeed, in the West Indies. It made me blind in a manner for about three weeks, and during that time, if a ray of light by any means broke into my darkened chamber, it was like a thorn or pin run into my eye, and so I often described it. I felt also the subsequent effect for years, which I suppose to have been experienced by St. Paul, a predisposition to inflammation in the eyes, which extreme care and timely applications prevented from recurring.

I see a further possible source of this idea in his mind, in the fact that thorns in *the eyes*, are figuratively used in different parts of scripture to signify troubles and temptations, (see Numbers xxxiii. 55, and Joshua xxiii. 13.) Now if this metaphor had an affinity with the actual bodily sensations of the apostle, it was natural he should think of and use it, but as natural that he should vary it into the more general term *flesh*, that he might not confound the proper with the metaphorical sense, and be understood to mean that a thorn actually thrust into his eye had produced the disease.

This may be thought perhaps too refined. But the strongest argument of all remains, and appears to me nearly, if not quite, decisive. It rests upon

Digitized by Google

Galatians iv. 15. After praising them in the preceding verse, for not despising his fleshly infirmity, (whatever that was) he here subjoins, *I bear you record, that if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me.* How natural this context on my hypothesis! How little so on any other! Was it a moral infirmity, a temptation shewn by its fruits? It might then have *pardon*; it might have charitable and respectful *indulgence*, in consideration of the great and good qualities which were seen in the same character; but it could not give rise to such glowing affection, such ardour of sympathetic kindness as these words import. Again, was it a bodily infirmity affecting some other member than the eyes; how extremely unnatural this expression of the sympathy which it produced. Let us take for instance, Doddridge's conjecture, 'You saw my paralytic distortions in my *mouth* and *cheeks*, you heard my stammering *tongue*, when I first preached the gospel to you; but you despised not those infirmities. On the contrary, you would, if it had been possible, have plucked out your own *eyes* and given them to me.' Suppose lameness, or some sharp internal disease, (as others have supposed, notwithstanding the visible character of the infirmity) and the incongruity is not much, if at all less. But if the apostle was speaking of his diseased eyes, which made his aspect unsightly, and prevented perhaps much of the natural effect of his preaching, to which they nevertheless respectfully listened, and with affectionate sympathy did

Digitized by Google

all they could for his comfort and relief, how natural, how appropriate this grateful close of the encomium! Such was your generous and tender sympathy, that I verily believe if you could have removed those sufferings of mine, and that obstacle to my more perfect usefulness, by taking the infirmity in my stead, by plucking out your own sound eyes, and transferring them to my use, you would have been willing to do so.

If parental fondness for a supposed discovery of my own does not deceive me, these reasons, when taken together, are nearly conclusive. The point to be sure, after all, is of no great importance; but if Mrs. H. More thinks it worth her while to notice the guesses on this subject at all, here is what I suppose to be a new one, for her consideration.

With kind respects and best wishes to yourself and all the other ladies of Barley Wood,

I am, my dear Madam,

Very sincerely and respectfully your's,

JAMES STEPHEN.

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Stephen.

Barley Wood, Jan. 10, 1815.

MY DEAR SIR,

By what ill-fortune was it that you did not send me your obliging communication on the subject of St. Paul's infirmity sooner? The volumes were both very nearly printed before I received your interesting letter, and the small portion not yet

Digitized by Google

printed is in the printer's hands, so that I could not *possibly* avail myself of your kindness. If, however, which is uncertain, a second edition should be called for, I will try hard to find a place for it, either in the body of the work, or as a note. If your interpretation is *not* true, though I believe verily it *is*, it is at least ingenious enough to deserve to be true. The evidence from Galatians is, I think, irresistible.

When I have the honour to send you St. Paul, you will, perhaps, if you can get leisure, either find, or make, a niche in the first volume where we may hook in your suggestion, if I shall not have done it before; the bookseller has promised it within a fortnight, but those gentry are never punctual.

I am glad you have made your escape from the toils of office, to enjoy the sweets of affectionate and pious intercourse. I have been suffering from, I think, a direct ophthalmia, which consigned me to complete darkness and idleness. This suffering perhaps prepared me better to enter into your ophthalmic discussion, and to feel for my apostle. I am pleased, because I know it will please her, to think that dear Mrs. Stephen is quietly enjoying her brother's society. Some friends of mine, now spending the winter in Voltaire's beautiful house at Geneva, with their Swiss relations, have sent me a paper in which the council and authorities of that state declare themselves to coincide with the English in the full determination to support the abolition of the Slave Trade. I have sent it to Mr. Wilberforce, desiring him to get it into

Digitized by Google

the newspapers. If he does, as I hope he will, I will be much obliged to you, dear Sir, to send it to me, that I may send it to the council *printed.* I fear our dear Mr. W. may forget it.

I get many interesting letters from friends in Paris and Geneva, the former lamenting the extinction of religion, the latter its very deteriorated state; but the morals of the higher class in Geneva appear, though degenerated, not to partake of the profligacy of France.

My sister desires me, with her best regards, to thank you for your letter.

Adieu, my dear Sir, believe me ever, with the truest regard and esteem,

Your faithful and very obliged,

H. MORE.

From Mr. Stephen to Mrs. H. More.

January, 1815.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Wilberforce agreed with me, that supposing my fancied discovery of any value, (a point on which I was too prudent to press for his opinion) it still was not worthy a place in your work, as being unsuitable to its general character; I therefore have told Cadell and Davies it is not to be inserted. Indeed, I told them before, not to stop the printing of the new edition for the sake of the appendage, as you doubted of inserting it, but I found that the new impression was not then in such forwardness, that the question could lead to delay.

Digitized by Google

In thus losing the honour you designed for me, I feel like a young lady, shut out by want of an expected invitation, from a court ball; but then I feel such consolation as she might have, if she found that her dress would not have suited the costume of the evening.

With Mrs. S.'s and my kind respects to all your fire-side, if the warm weather does not make that figure out of season,

I am, my dear Madam,

Very respectfully and sincerely your's,

JAMES STEPHEN.

P. S. You may perceive by the different ink and rumpled paper, that my letter was not finished the day I began it. I was interrupted, and must now trust to your excusing a very slovenly sheet, lest I should be interrupted again, for these are busy times with me. I too have been at press, and Mrs. S. tells me I should send you my new work, but really I am almost ashamed to do so. It is nothing but a dry legal and political argument, about registering the slaves in the West Indies. However, as my pen will probably never produce better fruit, I will send it the first opportunity, but am not unreasonable enough to expect it should find any reader at Barley Wood. If it serves your sempstress for thread-papers, or your cook for singeing fowls, these are the best honours I expect for it.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. Siddons to Mrs. H. More.

Westbourne Farm, Jan. 25, 1815.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Upon my return home a few days since, after some long visits, I was most highly gratified in finding you had been so very good as to bestow upon me your invaluable 'character of St. Paul:' and what shall I say but that 'Whate'er you do, still betters what is done;' for unless I were gifted with piety and eloquence like your own, I should in vain attempt to thank you as I ought; but I persuade myself that my heartfelt, unadorned sense of your goodness, together with the grateful acknowledgment of your having encouraged and cheered my way to that better world, where I hope I may not be *so far* removed from the blessing of your society, as I have been unhappily here below, will be much more gratifying to you than any other offering could possibly be. Myself and my dear inmates desire you to accept and present to your amiable companions our very best wishes and kind remembrances; and I beg of you to believe me, my dear Madam,

Your very affectionate and grateful,

S. SIDDONS.

Digitized by Google

From Miss J. Porter to Mrs. H. More.

1815.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I seem to have too long delayed thanking you for the rich present you conveyed to me through the hands of Sir William Pepys; but my heart has never been silent in its acknowledgments for so invaluable an instance of your remembrance. And how can I express my gratitude better for the gift, and the kind as well as honouring recollection of the author, than by uttering my conviction of the blessing her pen has been to her country, and to distant lands? I need only call to the mind of Mrs. Hannah More, what was the state of morals and religious opinions, amongst all ranks of persons in this country, twenty years ago! The poor were in profligate ignorance—the rich in presumptuous apostacy. I cannot give the latter a milder name; for I remember that about that period (then a very young person,) I burst into tears at a large table after dinner, from horror and pity of some persons present, who were scoffing at religion, without a reprimand from any one. Such conduct now would not be tolerated a moment in any company; and the one I speak of, was then what was called a most respectable circle. You were then, dearest Madam, "sowing seeds in the Lord's vineyard." And the pious Mr. Raikes of Gloucester was "bringiug little children unto Christ," by the opening of Sunday Schools. From you and from him, under heaven, I date the

Digitized by Google

regeneration of the people of this country. Your pen addressed the young, the old, the high and the low; and most happily, your former literary fame was a bright forerunner to your promulgation of the gospel. It made it fashionable to read your works; and by that word, they passed into all hands, and gradually infused their contents into all hearts. Mr. Raikes's Sunday Schools, in which effectual scheme for giving eyes to the blind, you also assisted, empowered the poor to read the Scriptures, and your practical tales upon their precepts. Thus the "wilderness" by degrees brought out its verdure, till now (dearest madam, do I say too much?) "it blossoms as the rose!" On the foundation of the Sunday Schools, and those pious Tracts, have arisen the Lancasterian and Bell Establishments; and all which the laity now so abundantly do by their pens, their personal exertions, and their individual examples, for the growth of Christianity in this land, and all the plans which are to bring into the paths of Christ, *all the distant nations*. My dear, dear Madam, when you think of this, must you not devoutly feel, that you are indeed "blessed above other women?"

I write under a double impression of the present happiness and future reward that must attend the performance of so high a duty; I write too, with a heart full of sorrow for the recent death of one of the sincerest and most active labourers in the cause of Christianity, Mr. Joseph Fox, of Argyle Street. He died last week, a victim to bodily and mental fatigue in the sacred duties he has so ably fulfilled,

Digitized by Google

I never knew a man of purer simplicity in thought, word, and deed. He had but one aim—the love of God. The eternal happiness of his creatures was the toil of his mind and his heart and his body; and yet the world had no part in him. He is taken to the blessedness of his Redeemer; and you are yet spared to "lead many" into the same heavenly course!

I have written all this, without apologizing for my long delay of writing, to say how honoured and happy I am in possessing the Essay on St. Paul *from* you, and *by* Sir William Pepys. It has a triple value with me. I have been very unwell, and am still an invalid—but never ungrateful. My mother and sister present their respects, with those of, dearest Madam,

Your obliged and affectionate,

JANE PORTER.

Digitized by Google

CHAPTER VII.

THE Essay on the Character and Writings of St. Paul made its appearance at a time of great agitation and affliction to the spirits and feelings of Mrs. Hannah More. The peril to which her own life had been exposed, and that of Miss Roberts, (who had narrowly escaped the destruction from which she had rescued her friend,) though it had ended in increasing her piety by supplying it with fresh motives and incitements, had produced its natural consequence upon a frame suffering under much debility and nervous distemperature. But these recollections and impressions were succeeded by events of a more painful interest. Two of those friends in whose society and friendship she had placed much of her happiness at a time when communication with sympathetic and virtuous minds, next to her confidence in the divine help, formed her most availing support, had been taken from her and their earthly connexions, to the place of the just made perfect. Mr. Henry Thornton first, and shortly afterwards, Mr. John Bowdler, whose characters

Digitized by Google

and mutual affection are sufficiently upon record, to render unnecessary any testimony of the writer of this memoir,—passed to their proper home in the beginning of the year 1815.

Mr. John Bowdler's death was thus affectingly communicated to Mrs. H. More by the late Mr. Stephen, of whose very instructive correspondence several specimens are already before the reader.

Mr. Stephen to Mrs. Martha More.

London, Feb. 2, 1815.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Though I think it probable that some other pen may perform the melancholy task of transmitting to Barley Wood the sad news of yesterday evening, I think it right to obtain better security against a surprise, by which Mrs. H. More, in the present state of her health, might suffer more than is necessary, by informing you that the friend, respecting whom she expressed her anxiety in a letter I received from her a little time ago, is no longer in the dark valley, but has passed out of it into that better country where we all hope one day to arrive. Dear Bowdler shut his eyes on the present scene yesterday noon. His race was short, but he ran well, and has, I doubt not, obtained the prize.

The postman's bell rings at the door. I must therefore break off, even without adding our salutations. I am, my dear Madam,

Very sincerely and respectfully your's,

JAMES STEPHEN.

Digitized by Google

From Lord Teignmouth to Mrs. H. More.

Portman Square, 1815.

MY DEAR MADAM,

Messrs. Cadell and Co. transmitted to me yesterday, a new memorial of your kind remembrance, for which I return you my sincere thanks. I have already read enough of your *Essay on the Character and Practical Writings of St. Paul*, to convince me, that if the perusal of the whole should fail to impart both pleasure and improvement, it must be my own fault.

A memorial of this nature from a living friend could never come at a more opportune time, than when I was lamenting my loss in the deprivation of two friends who were among the excellent of the earth. I cannot express my feelings at the awful dispensations of the last three weeks. A few days only are elapsed, since Mr. J. Bowdler soothed the dying moments of his friend, and we are now lamenting our deprivation of him. I saw Mr. Bowdler for the last time, on the afternoon of the day in which his friend departed, and he spoke of the probability of that event speedily taking place, without any suspicion of his own approaching removal.

Lord Calthorpe, at whose house Mr. Bowdler died, writes to me, what you will read with sympathy: 'the loss of him as an example, a guide, and

Digitized by Google

counsellor, seems to me as far as earthly prospects extend, irreparable; and yet I have so much reason to be thankful for the privilege of attending him during his last days, and witnessing his patience under great suffering, and hearing his consoling and animating language of praise, that I am willing to sink the consideration of my own personal loss, in the pleasure arising from the assurance of the happiness into which he has entered.'

These awful admonitions leave no room in the heart for any other meditations than what they suggest. I pray to God that they may be sanctified to me, and to those whom I love, that as we increase in years, we may increase in righteousness, and that his Holy Spirit may so guide and confirm us in the path of true lively faith and holy obedience, that we may, through the merits of our Redeemer, meet together in the society of the spirits of the just made perfect.

Lady Teignmouth unites with me in the sentiments which I have expressed; she begs her affectionate remembrance to you, and we join in the kindest regards to your sister.

I am, my dear Madam,
your sincere and obliged,
TEIGNMOUTH.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. H. More to Lady Olivia Sparrow.

1815.

MY DEAREST LADY OLIVIA,

How alas! shall I touch on the successive grievous strokes with which we have been smitten in three short weeks? They seem to have come rapidly upon us, like the messengers of sad tidings to Job. Our eyes were not dried after the irreparable loss of Mr. H. Thornton before we received a deep and fresh blow in that of Mr. J. Bowdler; and as it is supposed that Bowdler's kind attendance on his dying friend was the immediate cause of his own death, so the attendance of Dr. Buchanan at the funeral of his generous patron is said to have given him the cold which sent him to the grave. We may say with good old Jacob, "All these things are against us." But God's ways are not as our ways; he saw that our lamented friends were matured for heaven beyond the usual ripeness even of distinguished Christians; and consummated their bliss when we would gladly have detained them in a world of sin and sorrow and incessant trial. They have left us examples both how to live and how to die: their lives were patterns, may their deaths be both a weaning and a warning to us, and forward us in our pilgrimage through this vale of tears.

I have a very pious letter from Harriet Bowdler: she is very anxious to see me; but my state of health

Digitized by Google

is very bad, or I should think it a duty to go to her. I trust this event will be greatly sanctified to her. In Mr. Thornton I have lost not only the most wise and consistently virtuous and pious, but the most attached, faithful, and confidential friend. My schools too, have lost their principal support for twenty-five years; but my own life is likely to be so short that I trust the goodness of Providence will enable me to carry them on to the end.

Dr. Buchanan is an irreparable loss to the oriental scripture translations. You will be pleased with a conversation he had with a friend a short time before his death. He was describing the minute pains he had been taking with the proofs and revisions of the Syriac Testament, every page of which passed under his eye *five* times before it was finally sent to press. He said 'he had expected before-hand that this process would have proved irksome to him; but no,' he added, 'every fresh perusal of the sacred page seemed to unveil new beauties.' Here he stopped and burst into tears. 'Do not be alarmed,' said he to his friend, as soon as he recovered himself, 'I could not suppress the emotion I felt as I recollected the delight it had pleased God to afford me in the reading of his word.'

It is rather ridiculous that I have not a single copy of St. Paul for my sisters to read, the first edition having been sold the first day.

Your's very affectionately,

H. More.

Digitized by Google

At this period, (1815) so eventful to Mrs. More, she had accomplished her seventieth year, with her mind unspent by her successive labours, the latest of which, the *Essay on St. Paul*, had been most remarkable for its rapid execution. Her *public* mind, which extended its care to every thing connected with the spiritual and moral welfare of her country, associated her in co-operation or in correspondence with almost every person distinguished for his activity in the promotion of national piety and social happiness. On these sympathies with the general good of her country, was founded her intimate friendships with the Bishops of Salisbury and Lichfield, (Dr. Thomas Burgess and Dr. Henry Ryder,) who will, it is hoped, forgive the introduction of their names into this work, names which bring to the mind of the editor the memory of much personal kindness towards himself, and with one of which is associated the remembrance of his earliest acquaintance with the delights of classical literature, and the proper scope of youthful studies.

The Bishop of St. David's, since translated to the See of Salisbury, must well remember the lively interest felt by Mrs. Hannah More, in his exertions in behalf of the clergy of the principality, and for supplying a collegiate education for the church within the bounds of his diocese. In the memory of the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, stand recorded the friendship and correspondence which he long enjoyed with this estimable lady, and the

Digitized by Google

animated part which she took in every scheme for the advancement of vital religion.

Her heart was warm towards those whose hearts were warm in the cause of righteousness and truth. If there have been some who have been more remarkable for throwing aside the dross of earthly attachments, and sublimating their thoughts towards heaven, there have been none who have striven with more success to draw from their earthly attachments the essential aids of spiritual solace and encouragement.

With a mind so constituted, it could not but be matter of much rejoicing to Mrs. H. More, to witness the formation of a Branch Bible Society in her own parish of Wrington. Fostered by her patronage, and the active services of her sisters, the anniversaries of this Christian celebration in that quarter, became a very distinguished rallying point to all who were zealously affected in the good cause. On the day of meeting, the house and grounds of Barley Wood were thrown open to more than a hundred persons, who were hospitably entertained by the sisters, and furnished with an opportunity of confederating for the promotion of a common interest, under the banner of a courageous woman, to combat under whose command, had something of the character of chivalrous devotion.

A letter to Mr. Wilberforce comprises a short account of one of these galas.

Digitized by Google

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

1816.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I am very glad your sons have drawn you to the lakes: it is a much wholesomer climate for them, both for soul and body, than the pestiferous air of Paris, which so many of their countrymen are now breathing. It will, I hope, also invigorate you for your winter labours.

I have had a delightful, gay, and wise letter from Sir Thomas Acland. The Babingtons are coming to us this week: they have never been at Barley Wood. What are these *Scilly* distresses that you have taken up? if they are as pressing as the papers say, will you advance five pounds for me, and I will repay you as soon as you let me know it. How goes on your new empire of Hayti? I take great interest in its progress, of which I know nothing but from the papers.

We have many visitors from America, where religion appears to be rapidly advancing. There seems also to be a great cultivation of intellect going on there, as they all read a vast deal; having they say, in some of the provinces, no other amusement.

This hot weather, trying as it is, has, on the whole, been of service to us both, as you will believe, when I tell you what a gala we have been enabled to give. Our anniversary Bible Meeting at Wrington was held lately. Our country, surrounded by

Digitized by Google

the sea on one side, and Mendip on the other, is so thinly planted with gentry, (the spiritual climate also being rather cold,) that without some effort somewhere it would come to nothing. The meeting was the most genteel and numerous we ever had. If our oratory was not of the first brilliancy, it had good sense and good temper to recommend it. We had near forty clergymen of the Establishment, so that even Archdeacon —— cannot plant us in his 'hot-bed of heresy and schism.' When the meeting was over, which was held in a waggon-yard, as there was no room for them in the inn, all the superior part of the company resorted, by previous invitation, to Barley Wood. A hundred and one sat down to dinner, and about one hundred and sixty to tea. Happily it was a fine day, and above fifty dined under the trees,—the overflowings from our small house. They all enjoyed themselves exceedingly, and it had all the gaiety of a public garden.

Some may think that it would be better to add £20. to our subscription, and save ourselves so much trouble; but we take this trouble from a conviction of the contrary. The many young persons of fortune present, by assisting at this little festivity, will learn to connect the idea of innocent cheerfulness, with that of religious societies, and may "go and do likewise." For no other cause on earth would we encounter the fatigue.

I had got thus far when I was called down to our friend Mr. Hart Davis and his family. He gives us better hopes of the new parliament.

Digitized by Google

I have a great loss in poor Mr. ——. He was both a useful and a pleasant neighbour, though our disagreement on certain great points prevented that union, without which all friendship is imperfect. I have seen *her*, she sees no one else. Love to Mrs. Wilberforce.

Your's ever affectionately,

H. More.

Extract of a letter from Mrs. H. More to Mr. Harford, at Rome.

Barley Wood, Feb. 22, 1816.

My dear Friend,

It gives me much pleasure to find by your letter, that you and Mrs. H. are blessed with such good health; as this not only enables you to pursue the interesting purpose of your travels, but gives a zest to the enjoyment of them. I enter warmly into the grand objects you describe, whether they be *existing exemplifications* of all that is sublime or beautiful in art or nature, or what is perhaps still more affectingly interesting, the precious *relics* of ancient magnificence and departed glory.

I am glad you are in such superior and cultivated society, especially of your own countrymen. In general, I suppose you are ready to exclaim with Goldsmith, in describing the wonders of Italy,

'Man is the only growth that dwindles here.'

You, however, seem to have met with exceptions. We have nothing here very interesting. It must

Digitized by Google

appear a paradox to other countries, that peace and plenty have brought, as it should seem, poverty and ruin into this. I hope it is only *pro tempore*, but I never knew so much distress. The rich have no money, and the poor have no work.

In the way of friendship, I have sustained some heavy losses since we parted. Mrs. ——, in spite of the most earnest struggles to bear up against her affliction, soon followed her excellent husband, and society has not often had to regret a more sainted pair. Within the last month I have had to mourn the death of another valuable and most attached friend, Lady Waldegrave. She also was enabled by the grace of God, to bear her dying testimony to the reality of religion. She is one of those "who through much tribulation have entered into the kingdom of God."

Our church is not only rent by the public schism of ——, &c. who have quitted our 'unscriptural' establishment, and are setting up a church of their own, which is to be purified by the expulsion of the ten commandments and other antiquated errors; but it is rent in pieces by the divisions of the high church and evangelical parties. O how I hate faction, division, and controversy in religion! And yet if people will advance dangerous absurdities till they become popular, truth must not be left to shift for herself.

The Prince Regent has done himself great credit by the respect, I had almost said reverence, with which he has behaved to Mr. Wilberforce at Brighton, where both have passed the winter. His

Digitized by Google

invitations to him to dinner were incessant: finding him often evading them, he assured him that he should never hear a word at his table which could give him a moment's pain. He kept his word. Went frequently, and was on the whole much pleased. He said the Prince's behaviour at the head of his table, gave the idea of a true English gentleman. It is pleasing to see how consistency in religion ultimately beats down all hostility. Oh that it were more frequently seen in religious people!

Stephen's address to Spain on the revival of the Slave Trade is worthy of Edmund Burke.

My kind love to Mrs. H. My sisters desire me to add their kind regards to those of

Your affectionate friend,

H. More.

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

Barley Wood, 1816.

My dear Friend,

I was glad to receive even your promissory note, though it has not been followed by the prompt payment it announced. I do not mean your half bank note of £50. which came safe, but your letter. The papers told us of—not your honours—but those of the Regent—for surely he never did himself so much credit as in seeking your society; and though it does YOU no good, yet it will do good in too many ways for me to specify.

I have been ill since my last attack of fever, my nights being not only wakeful but harassing and

Digitized by Google

distressing. I am getting better, though I thought I was rapidly breaking up. The fever has left me a wholesome warning. Like Barzillai, I have long ceased "to hear any more the voice of singing men and singing women;" but now, though I hope I can still "discern between good and evil," "thy servant cannot taste what I eat or what I drink," that is, I have lost the two senses of smell and taste completely, for six weeks. It has given me an excellent lesson not to overlook common mercies, for I forgot to value these blessings till I had lost them; the loss, too, is a good corrective of sensuality, as I know not bread from meat.

You bid me not be silent under the pretence of living in a hermitage. Alas! Barley Wood is nothing less. Thinking it right, many years ago, to gain a little interval between the world and the grave, when I renounced the society of the great and the gay, the learned and the witty, I fully made up my mind to associate only with country people. Yet it so happens that the retirement I sought I have never yet been able to find; for though we neither return visits nor give invitations, I think, except when quite confined by sickness, I never saw more people, known and unknown, in my gayest days. They come to me as to the witch of Endor, and, I suppose, I shall soon be desired to tell fortunes, and cast nativities. I do little or no good to their minds, and they do much harm to my body, as talking much inflames my chest.

In spite of our inability to attend in winter, our schools are very flourishing. We have pious, faith-

Digitized by Google

ful teachers, who have served us twenty years, and we have reason to believe that many young persons, especially at Cheddar, are living in the fear of God. The evening sermons are well attended, and many seem seriously impressed.

I rejoice to hear that Mrs. Stephen is better. I have but just received Mr. S.'s masterly pamphlet.

Adieu, my very dear friend. Do not forget some times to include in your prayers, not the least affectionate of your friends,

H. More.

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Knox.

June, 1816.

My dear Sir,

Such a letter—nay, *two* such letters, and from such a friend! and no notice taken, just as if I had received no such letters, or did not feel their value, or was not gratified by them, or was not grateful for them. But if they have not been answered, they have been read, and re-read: and not only by myself, but two or three friends who were worthy of them, both from intellect and piety, have been treated with a perusal of them—persons who were qualified to enter into your views of the scheme of that omnipotent disposer who holds the whole chain of providences in his hand;—persons who had feelings sufficiently alive to weep over your graphical detail of the sainted Lady Emily.

But now I *have* taken up my pen, it is rather to

Digitized by Google

acknowledge, than to answer your letter; it is only a pepper-corn for a payment. When I tell you the situation of my family, you will forgive my delay and brevity. My poor sister Martha has been out not more than three or four times for the last nine months. Her complaint is a liver case, and the reigning feature of it a determination of blood to the head. I fear she is in a very declining state; I have sad prognostics. Her loss to *me* would be incalculable, to whom she has been eyes, and hands, and feet. My lively sister Sarah, who still retains, *at times*, all the spirit and vivacity of youth, is pronounced to be far gone in a dropsy: we lately thought her going very rapidly, but I bless God, she somewhat rallied, and may, I hope, be spared to us a little longer;—but her symptoms are very bad. My *now* eldest sister, who has long had paralytic indications, had been many weeks in bed, with a mortification in her leg. This has been resisted by vigorous measures; but last week, after many hours quiet sleep, we found on awaking, that she had lost the power of swallowing and of articulation. She has remained speechless ever since, and it is a pitiable sight, when we 'explore the asking eye,' to receive no answer. She seems to look at us, but 'there is no speculation in those looks.' These are trying scenes; pray for me, my good friend, that they may be salutary scenes. I myself am but slowly recovering from a bilious fever, which has left me much nausea, and an entire want of appetite.

I make no apology, my dear Sir, for thus troubling

Digitized by Google

you in detail with the annals of an hospital. But I thought that nothing less than this true narrative could justify my silence, after the profit and pleasure I derived from your letter.

I am so far your disciple, that is, so much of an optimist, as to see a graciously providential hand in all these dealings. I feel, even at my age, that I stand in need of reiterated correction. My temper is naturally gay. This gaiety, even time and sickness have not much impaired. I have carried too much sail. My life upon the whole, must be reckoned an uncommonly prosperous and happy one. I have been blessed with more friends of a superior cast, than have often fallen to the lot of so humble an individual. Nothing but the grace of God, and frequent attacks through life of very severe sickness, could have kept me in tolerable order. If I am no better with all these visitations, what should I have been without them? No, my dear Sir, I have never yet felt a blow of which I did not perceive the indispensable necessity; in which, on reflection, I did not see and feel the compassionate hand of divine mercy,—the chastisement of a tender father.

My chief regret is, that I cannot contrive to live sufficiently quiet. It is now many years since I built and planted this pretty little place, and voluntarily turned my back upon the gay, the great, and the brilliant, in whose society I had spent near thirty years. I had then, I thought, completed a scheme of retirement which I had enjoyed in fancy and anticipated in vision all my life. But the day-

Digitized by Google

dream has never been realized; my interruptions from company, many of them strangers, are almost incessant. This ungratified, but predominant love of tranquillity began so early, that when I was seven or eight years old, I used to say, that if I should ever live to have a house of my own, I would take care to have it built too low for a clock, and too small for a harpsichord.

I think myself much honoured by Dr. Miller's intention to send me his work. I am impatient to receive it. Your report originally excited this desire, and your ample and deep comments since its publication have made me still more desirous than ever to peruse a work so important in its object, and so able in its execution. I hope Dr. M.'s bookseller will soon gratify my wishes.

This letter of mine appears to be full of *self*. But if ever egotism is pardonable, I think it is in letters between friends. At least, I never think the letters of *my* friends egotistical enough.

Many thanks for the copies of the Preface to Bishop Burnet. I have gratified some friends who are worthy, by presenting them with it.

I am disappointed in not seeing, while fresh from Bellevue, and her mind brimful and running over, dear Lady Olivia Sparrow; but she is obliged to delay her visit. When we do meet, we shall find it an inexhaustible subject,

'From morn to noon, from noon to dewy eve.'

I rejoice at the tolerable account you give of your

Digitized by Google

own health in this season of almost universal sickness. My friends are fast dropping off.

'For us they sicken, and for us they die.'

Adieu, my dear Sir, believe me with every sentiment of regard and attachment,

Your's very sincerely,

H. More.

From Mrs. H. More to Mr. Wilberforce.

October 21, 1816.

My dear Friend,

Feeble and exhausted as was the state of your lamented sister, I was almost as much surprised as afflicted at the receipt of your kind, but sorrowful communication last night; for I had been led to hope that she might have been spared to us a year or two longer. Yet why repine that her suffering probation is abridged, and that she has entered upon her eternal state of rest and blessedness? Yet, though she and I should in all probability never have met again in this world, I cannot but mourn at this new rent made in my friendship so soon after Mrs. H.'s death. A hundred endearing circumstances occur to my mind, from the time I used to drive with *Miss Wilberforce* in her phaeton over Claverton Down thirty years back, to her kind fortnight passed with us two summers ago! How little *now* signify her suffering body, and her tender spirit, and her pious anxieties! yet, all perhaps have, under the grace of God, contributed to her present felicity.

Digitized by Google

Her lively wit, and her deep humility, formed an union I have not often seen. Humility, I think, was a distinguishing grace in her character. To know that she is dead is afflicting, but to be assured that she is safe, what a happiness! The cause which prevented your coming to us is of a nature to make me say nothing of our disappointment, much as we had set our hearts on seeing you once more in this mutable, uncertain, disappointing world! I hope you left Lord Calthorpe better. The life and health of so pious and benevolent a nobleman is a public concern. I have the highest possible respect for him.

Patty, I fear, is in very declining health. I have ventured a few lines to dear Mr. Stephen, may God comfort him! My dear friend, pray for your very faithful,

H. More.

From Mr. Stephen to Mrs. H. More.

Hans Place, Oct. 24, 1816.

My dear Madam,

I am truly sensible of your great kindness. Such a tribute to my dear Mrs. S.'s[1] memory from *your* pen is highly acceptable to me, especially at this painful moment; and your obliging attention to myself is the more gratifying from the recollection, that I owe it, with other honours of a like kind, of which I most sincerely feel myself unworthy, to *her*.

[1] Mr. Wilberforce's sister.

Digitized by Google

I feel the justice of all you say as to the consolation which my love for her ought to find in the consequences of this event to herself. To doubt that she is happy, knowing her life and heart as I have done these seventeen years, would be with me to doubt, not whether there be few, but *any* that shall be saved; and to reject entirely the promises of the gospel; for if she was not a true Christian, and of the highest class, the character is no where to be found, and I believe will never be seen on earth. You, my dear Madam, thought highly of her; and who can better judge what woman ought to be? But rely on it, that with all you saw of her worth, much more remained unseen, even by penetration like your's. It is in the daily and hourly conduct of domestic life, and in the privacy of the family circle, and by long observation there, that a character like her's can alone be thoroughly studied, and sufficiently admired. For my part, I can most conscientiously affirm, that every year, and every month since I first had the high honour and happiness to possess her, added to my admiration of her virtues. Such perfect disinterestedness, such generous self-denial, such spotless truth and integrity, such unaffected humility, and tenderness of conscience, such vigilance, watchfulness against sin, above all, such a devotedness to God, and zeal for his service—devotedness, rational and enlightened, though, alas, from the body's maladies, not always cheerful; zeal, always gentle, always candid, yet overflowing in works of love—have, I believe, very rarely been found to indicate with equal clear-

Digitized by Google

ness the source from which they flowed, a true and living faith. I know not whether to add to the rest the exquisite sensibility of her affectionate heart, which, however endearing to me and all she loved, was too natural to her, perhaps, to be reckoned among her Christian graces. Yet like the charms of her understanding and wit, it gave to the abundant clusters which proved her a genuine branch of the true vine, a higher bloom and flavour.

Yes, my dear Madam, the present, the eternal felicity of such a spirit is not less certain than the truth of those Sacred Scriptures which are the foundation of all our hopes, the records of our immortality and our redemption.

I admit, therefore, that my grief is purely selfish. But the love of *spiritual* self, is what even her generous heart allowed, and I may therefore justly grieve at having lost my faithful monitress, the vigilant and enlightened friend of my soul, who never deserted the duty of pointing out to me what she saw to be wrong in my conversation and conduct, or opinions, on sacred subjects; of confirming me in what she thought to be right, and animating me to the Christian combat. Here is a loss which no human friend can supply. My dear Wilberforce has neither time nor opportunities, and with other friends, the difficulties would be greater on both sides, even if they knew my heart as well as he, and had all his affection for me. The qualifications for those best offices of friendship are of slow growth, as well as rare attainment.

But God can make up to me even this loss by the

Digitized by Google

guidance of his Holy Spirit. To Him, therefore, I must fly for aid, as well as consolation; and that my prayers may be accepted, I must endeavour to attain a patient, cheerful resignation to his will. At present it is hard to do so; for though my spiritual loss ought to be thought the worst, I have other and most painful subjects of regret, as those who knew her, and have sensibility to estimate the loss of such a companion, just when I am entering on the most wearisome stage of my pilgrimage, will easily conceive.

The refreshment of which you so kindly wish I could partake, in your hospitality at Barley Wood, will not soon be within my reach. Official and other public duties will long confine me to London. But I hope, though not there, to have an interest in the prayers of a family, of whom my dear Mrs. S. thought so highly, and to whom she was so affectionately attached. With kindest respects to all the members of it,

I am, my dear Madam,
Very respectfully and affectionately,
Your obliged and obedient servant,
JAMES STEPHEN.

From the Rev. Dr. Magee to Mrs. H. More.

Armagh, Nov. 22, 1816.

MY DEAR MADAM,

I will not attempt to express the satisfaction I feel from your approbation of the supplementary volume of my book which has been lately published.

Digitized by Google

It is not merely in commendation (though coming from one whose commendation is praise) but as the testimony of an eminently qualified judge to the usefulness of the publication, that I prize the opinion which has been so favourably given. I am aware, indeed, that the zeal of a good mind against a bad cause, has no small share in the decision. But to have even the zeal of Mrs. Hannah More associated with one's exertions is no mean matter of self-gratulation.

The modern Socinian is a most impracticable subject. On him there seems but little chance of making any impression. I found myself obliged, therefore, to look *from* him altogether, and to turn myself to those who might be in danger of being entrapped by his wiles. Having no hope of reclaiming, my sole object has been to expose him; and, in truth, I cannot help considering my occupation as bearing a strong resemblance to that of the thief-catcher—which, though it may be a very useful, is certainly not a very honourable species of employment. I have sometimes feared that the language I have been compelled to use might go beyond the sympathy of the reader. And yet, in reality, the desperate duplicity and deliberate dishonesty of the thorough-faced champions of the cause far transcend all that the strongest language could convey. Much as I have been able to bring to light, it gives but a faint idea of what *might* be dragged forth out of this den of Cacus, could either the moral taste or human patience of the reader endure the full exhibition. I confess, for

Digitized by Google

my own part, I am literally sick of the subject: and grieve to have had so much time *so* expended. With the exception of, possibly, a separate publication of that part of the volumes, which relates to the Socinian controversy exclusively, (a measure to which I have alluded in the present volume, and to which the Bishops of Durham and St. David's strongly encourage me) together with perhaps a few additional observations which Unitarian animadversions on what has now been published may occasion, I mean never to give up another hour to an exercise of mind which is so little favourable to the acquisition or the communication of knowledge, and which is so peculiarly unfriendly to the cultivation of a Christian temper.

How forcibly, my dear Madam, do I find myself impressed with the contrast between your labours and mine! Not to speak of those felicitous powers which are displayed so variously and so irresistibly through the numerous writings with which you have enriched the world, and which, as they are so rarely bestowed, are fairly to be considered as without the range of ordinary comparison—your pen has been employed in pourtraying all that is rational and amiable in human conduct; and in exhibiting in the most attractive colours, all that is worthy of the love and admiration of human kind. By enforcing the principles of duty, and embellishing the truths of religion, you have been advancing others and yourself in the path of true happiness. Whilst engaged in the delightful task of directing and cheering forward your fellow creatures in their pro-

Digitized by Google

gress to that better state of being for which they were designed, you have been by the same act continually heightening the monitor into the guide, and have had the blessed reward of your own exertions returning upon yourself from the very efforts which you made for others. In a word—you have been exercising every worthy feeling of the heart, and every healthful faculty of the understanding, for a great and expanded purpose, commensurate with the best interests of the human race; whilst I have been doomed to a tedious warfare against sophistry and falsehood—compelled to wear out patience and charity in a painful but necessary combat with those who would rob the Christian of his hope, and drain away the very life-blood from Christianity.

But, my dear Madam, I must not fatigue you with the subject which has so often fatigued myself, nor allow that which has wasted so much paper for me already, to waste that also which I might employ so much better when conversing with you.

Your apprehensions respecting the distresses of this country, are but too well grounded. But as our people are more used to privations than those on your side of the water, they bear them better. It is remarkable that what causes turbulence with you, produces tranquillity with us. The hunger which makes John Bull clamorous, renders his brother Paddy quiet. We quarrel most when we have the greatest plenty. The distresses of our poor are however great indeed. I have the better oppor-

Digitized by Google

tunity of knowing this from my present situation, having been for some months with my family in my northern parish in Tyrone, where, notwithstanding all the industry and frugality which distinguish this province from the rest of Ireland, we find very great want, with much reason to apprehend more as the season advances.

Mrs. Magee has undertaken the management of a poor-shop, and some other charities here, to lighten the burden as much as possible. She and all my family are kept extremely busy with the occupation; and indeed this has been a principal cause of my continuing my residence here in the winter; my place can be supplied in Cork by many, but, here, in a retired country parish, there is no one to take it.

Did I not feel my continuance here, under these circumstances, to be a duty not to be dispensed with, I should lose no time in returning to the deanery, as in this place I am totally destitute of books. To be nearly three hundred English miles removed from the implements of his trade is not a convenient arrangement for the workman. It is indeed one serious objection to my present situation, that, during a certain portion of every year I must be placed at so great a distance from my books and manuscripts. Now that I find myself released from Socinian embarrassments, I regret this the more, as I am particularly anxious to forward to the press two works which have lain by for some time, nearly ready for publication—one on the Protestant Rule of Faith, as contrasted with that of the Romish

Digitized by Google

church; and the other on the proofs of the Messiah, derived from the Prophecies of Daniel.

You are good enough to mention a little poem, entitled 'Emigration,' as worthy of attention; I shall endeavour to procure it. A work of a very different nature, ponderous, tautologous, and in every way ill-written, has lately made its appearance. But yet it is of so extraordinary a nature, and proposes to accomplish so vast an object, that I cannot but recommend it to your notice, should it fall in your way. It is written by a Scotch divine, and aims at no less an achievement than that of *demonstrating upon principles of reason, the necessity* of the existence of three persons in the Godhead, and the *impossibility* of more than three. It will at least tend to shew to the presumptuous rationalist, that to the reason of others *that* appears incontrovertible, which to his reason appears impossible, and that therefore nothing is gained to him after all, by forcing human reason into a province in which it has no jurisdiction. The last article in the British Review last published, on the subject of tithes, contains some remarks of peculiar excellence. The conductors of that journal have great merit. I trust it will not be discontinued.

I think, my dear Madam, I may now justly apologise for taking up so much of your time. But I cannot conclude without a few additional words, to thank you for the kind inquiries you have been good enough to make about Mrs. Magee's health, and that of my family. We have, thank God, all of us, (and that is not a word of small

Digitized by Google

import) enjoyed good health, notwithstanding the severity of the late extraordinary season; and most sincerely do I hope that you both have been, and may long continue to be, similarly favoured. Often do my family and myself receive instruction and delight from your many admirable productions, and often have we felt and expressed the wish that a lengthened possession of life and health might be vouchsafed to the person at whose hands the public had received such inestimable benefits.

Your observations on St. Paul I have studied with peculiar interest, and with the greatest advantage.

With the truest good wishes, I remain, my dear Madam,

Your faithful and much obliged,

W. MAGEE.

In the year 1816, the sisterhood suffered a second loss in Mrs. Elizabeth More, and were now reduced to three in number. She was a person of great kindness, and filled that department of domestic duty in their hospitable house, which, though less marked, is usually more missed than others of greater interest and attraction.

From Mrs. H. More to Lady Olivia Sparrow.

Barley Wood, 1816.

MY DEAR LADY OLIVIA,

How good and kind you are! I cordially thank you for your two feeling letters. It has, as you

Digitized by Google

have heard, pleased God of his great mercy to remove my poor sister Betty from this world of sin and sorrow. I humbly trust that through him who loved her, and gave himself for her, she is now a happy spirit, disencumbered from a suffering body, and escaped from all the penalties of age, and the evils of life. She had for many years spent the greater part of her time in reading the Scriptures and devotional books, and latterly has read nothing else; and though she was of a reserved temper, and said little, yet I am persuaded she felt her own sinfulness, and was earnest in her applications to the throne of grace and mercy. For the last fortnight she was entirely speechless; it was a most pitiable sight to see her struggling to express something she seemed to wish to say, for her intellect survived her power of articulation. May the remembrance of such scenes quicken *us*, and make us labour more diligently to be followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises!

Though all the visits you enumerate on your road from London to Brampton were of the interesting sort, yet I fear such a succession of engagements, though with the sensible and pious, must have worn you a little. A fresh scene and fresh friends, and even the very pleasure of seeing them, always occasions in me, and I believe in you, a degree of excitement, which, though to my friends it looks like health and spirits, is a feeling which always costs me much at the time, and more afterwards. Quietness, even to dulness, is, I always find, the best state for health and tranquillity of spirit.

Digitized by Google

Perhaps I do you injustice in presuming it may be in some degree your case. *You* indeed are young, but you are delicate also, I am therefore glad to know that you are safe at Brampton, where, though you have more business, you have not so much wear and tear of the mind, as in keeping up, in repeated societies, animated conversation. I say *repeated* societies, for, when one stays long with the *same* set of friends, things are more *suivies*, and there is not that novelty of perpetual excitation and mutual interest.

It rejoices my heart to think that we shall see you, (and see much of you I hope,) early in the autumn. I think you will find cause a little to alter the direction of your route. The Bishop will not be at Gloucester, where you talk of making your first stay, but at Wells, only eighteen miles from us, and about as much from Bristol, on the Somersetshire side.

You have seen Mr. Marriott's Lilliputian book, '*Hints to Travellers.*' It is very good and pleasing, like the amiable writer; and he has well maintained the one point he undertakes; but I wish he had gone a little further.

My dear Bishop Porteus and I made it a frequent topic of debate,—which was most calamitous to this country, war or peace with France. Even then we concluded that the latter would be the more formidable evil to us. Does not the event justify the terrible prognostic? O piety! O virtue! O my country!

Is it not the precise moment for the great and the opulent to dedicate their time, their exam-

Digitized by Google

ple, and their purses, to their own distressed country? It grieves me that the absentees have escaped the chance of being even politically useful to their own nation, by the repeal of the property tax. This universal mania at such a time, is, in my poor judgment, a marked æra of deterioration in the English character.

My kind remembrance to your dear companion. Patty desires to add her's to you.

Adieu, my dearest Lady Olivia,

Ever gratefully and faithfully your's,

H. More.

From the Rev. R. C. Whalley to Mrs. H. More.

My dear Friend,

You have, I find, lost your dear sister Betty. I pray God you may find her again in heaven. These recurring scenes of mortality require but little to be said upon them that has not been said, but a great deal more to be felt and practically profited by, than has been the case with the best of us. God give us all that grace we need for it. You will see by the date of this, that I am with my sister. My infirmities are such, that I visit no longer, but where I can give way to them and dictate; here I can do this; but yet probably for the last time. I was at Clifton three weeks; but in all that time, no weather for putting my head out of the house—none for a drive to Barley Wood. I came home much as I went; but, alas! have not continued so, for I caught cold, and have had the severest

Digitized by Google

fit of sickness that can well be imagined. When my fever left me, I contrived to get hither. I return to Chelwood next week—there to abide for what I hope will be a summer season to me; but nothing will suit me but the eternal summer, and may I be really prepared for that pure element. I shall hope to hear at your leisure, that you and your remaining sisters are tolerably well! Give my love to them. Believe me, I condole with you all,

And am, my dear Madam,
Your ever affectionate and obliged,
Friend and Servant,
R. C. WHALLEY.

END OF VOL. III.

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google

Digitized by Google